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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

HITLER, like the rest of us (including the Japanese), wants peace. What exactly this means is not clear from his latest speech. Certainly he wants to avoid war with Britain; but evidence is lacking of any intention on his part to slacken his propaganda in Austria or Czechoslovakia or to dissociate himself from the efforts of Italian Fascists to plunge France, like Spain, into civil war. When the Japanese say they want peace, we know exactly what they mean. They demand the surrender of the "anti-Japanese Government" of China and the substitution of a government totally subservient to Japan. The meeting of the Japanese Imperial Council in Tokyo seems to have formulated a clear alternative between a complete surrender and war to the utmost. There is no prospect of Chinese surrender; the core of the Chinese army remains undefeated and is now reforming near Suchow; and the determination of the civilian population to resist appears to be as strong as ever.

"China for the Japanese"

In pursuit of their policy of China for the Japanese, the invaders show a brutality and a lack of care for Western susceptibilities that has hitherto been reserved for the Chinese alone. Decent British policemen in Shanghai, angry witnesses of the cruelty shown to Chinese peasants, have themselves been beaten up; incidents have followed in quick succession, involving the Americans, French and Russians as well as the British. Britain, still optimistically hoping that Japan can be induced to respect her Yangtse trade, finds her ships forbidden to go up the river, though the Japanese are pleased enough to expedite their passage out to sea. The Union Jack is torn down and the Japanese flag substituted. Official British circles, patient under these insults, are now reaching the point of wishing furiously that the League had not been sabotaged when Japan entered Manchuria; there is talk of reconstructing the League at the next Council meeting. The form of the projected reconstruction is guess-work, but the main object would be to obtain the collaboration of the U.S.S.R. with France, Britain, the United States and other Powers in the Far East.

Crisis in France

The industrial troubles in Paris have developed into a political crisis, following the refusal of the French employers' federation to attend the industrial peace conference summoned by M. Chautemps. They demanded that the Government should invite other labour bodies besides the C.G.T.—in other words, that the company Unions

controlled by certain of the big firms should be included in the conference as representatives of Labour. This demand M. Chautemps had of course to refuse; and accordingly his conference became, instead of a peace conference between Capital and Labour, simply an occasion for the Government to sound the C.G.T. and the technicians and small employers concerning its proposals for a new labour law. The Government wants to include in its new scheme a provision for a compulsory ballot of the workers affected before a strike can take place, for penalties against either employers or workers for breach of arbitration awards, and for some control over the employers' rights of dismissal. This last is of special importance for the Trade Unions; for it is admitted that recently employers have been deliberately singling out active Union men for dismissal. This was, indeed, the main issue in the recent Goodrich strike. The fact is that the big employers seem determined to go back on the concessions which they were forced to make in face of the strike wave which accompanied the advent of the Blum Government.

The "Front Populaire" in Jeopardy

The next step of the employers has been a renewed endeavour to split the Radicals. M. Bonnet has attempted to govern in harmony with big business and high finance; and M. Caillaux and his section, entrenched in the Senate, will seize any chance of smashing the *Front Populaire*. M. Chautemps and the majority of the Radicals in the Chamber do not want this; but they do want to hold their party together, and this makes them drive M. Blum and his fellow-Socialists hard. But the Socialists will hardly agree, especially in face of the attitude of the big employers, to any restriction on the right to strike, and they will demand effective guarantees against victimisation of their shop stewards. Meanwhile, the employers have launched a renewed bear movement against the franc, designed to embarrass the Government and to strengthen the hands of M. Bonnet and the Radicals of the Right Wing. M. Chautemps may resign. Otherwise it seems as if he will have to choose between driving the Socialists out of the *Front Populaire*—which means its collapse—and risking a fresh offensive against the Government by the financial interests, supported by a considerable section of his own party.

The Teruel Victory

The Spanish Republic has finally consolidated its hold on Teruel. The enemy's attempts to recapture it were kept up with great determination through three weeks in weather that aggravated immeasurably the sufferings of both sides. Two events ended the long battle. The rebel garrison, 2,000 strong, that had held out stubbornly in a convent, surrendered; the Republicans won back two-thirds of the lofty plateau, "The Tooth," that dominates the town. The initial victory was a surprise won by the sudden concentration of superior forces. Encouraging as this was, the repulse of the counter-attack was an even more remarkable achievement, since the enemy had at least equal numbers and a superior equipment. Three gains have been won. A dangerous salient has been flattened out: the threatened general offensive of the enemy has been disorganised: finally, the new "Regular and Popular" army has proved itself capable of a major offensive. It is now generally recognised that the easy success of Franco's Italians in Basque territory are no augury of a like result elsewhere. The Basques were isolated; they had few heavy guns and no air force; their militia had not been transformed on the new model. We foresee no early end to this savage war, but it is significant that the Republic has taken the offensive successfully and held its gains against very strong and determined counter-attacks.

The Roman Empire

Count Ciano has been engaged this week in one of the periodical meetings with the Austrian and Hungarian premiers prescribed by the Rome protocol. Italy's two Danubian feudatories are apparently less enthusiastic over the connection than they were at first. They are indisposed to adhere to the triple alliance against Communism, nor do they propose to break with the League that restored their finances. Hungary's hopes that Italy will make any serious attempt to bring about revision have faded, since Italy drew closer first to Jugoslavia and now to Rumania. In proportion as the Roman Empire envisages the shores of the Mediterranean as its province, Jugoslavia becomes a more important satellite than either of the older Danubian States. This political ground of discontent is doubled by an economic grievance; for Italy has extended to Jugoslavia favours that Austria once enjoyed alone.

The Dacian Province

In the affairs of the new Roman Empire Dacia, otherwise Rumania, is still an enigma. M. Goga sent a flamboyant Latin greeting to the Duce, and a slightly less emotional "Heil" to Herr Hitler. But in quiet undertones his Foreign Office has declared that King Carol's kingdom adheres to all its engagements towards the Little Entente, which it will soon represent at Geneva. The King has responded to British and French reminders that Rumania has treaty obligations towards her minorities by an impudent but significant boast about her "traditional tolerance." It seems, indeed, fairly clear that the King and Mme. Lupescu, confronted by the formidable increase of the Fascist and anti-Semitic vote in the recent elections, deliberately raised the weaker and milder of the two rival agitators to office, convinced that he can be tamed for a consideration. Some Jews will doubtless have to pay the price, but these will be obscure victims in remote villages. Nothing untoward wil happen at Court or in the world of high finance. Ir diplomacy Rumania will sit on the fence and blackmai each group and "axis" by turns.

Conference with Eire

It is an ill-wind: considerations of defence strategy, in which food supplies from Eire are an important factor, may have been, on the British side, the strongest influence in favour of next week's conference with Mr. De Valera and his colleagues; but if the talks succeed, as we hope, in removing some of the stumbling-blocks in the way of friendlier Anglo-Irish relations, the threat of another world war will at least have led to one good result. On the political side there is little that can be fruitfully discussed. Eire has its new Constitution and, with it, the substance of Republican status within the Common-

wealth. British opinion has accepted that development without demur, but it would be idle for the President to ask the British Government to put pressure on Northern Ireland to agree to the repeal of Partition. If Mr. Chamberlain is willing to abandon all idea of reviving, in form, the dead and buried land annuity payments, the present limited coal-cattle pact should be capable of extension into a general trade agreement; but it has to be remembered that during the past five years of fiscal hostilities vested interests have grown up on either side. Mr. De Valera would doubtless be prepared to pay a price for attaining complete sovereignty over the ports reserved under the Treaty as British naval stations, but he will not be inclined to jettison the native industries he has built up, any more than British farmers would welcome unlimited imports of Irish dairy produce.

The T.U.C. and the Domestic Servants

The Trades Union Congress has hitherto never taken any direct responsibility for Trade Union organisation, though it has more than once given special help to organising campaigns among the agricultural workers. The General Council, however, is now apparently on the point of launching a Trade Union of its own—for workers in domestic service. There have been several attempts in the past to organise domestic workers, either in a separate Union, such as the Domestic Workers' Union which had a brief success just after the war, or in one or another of the general workers' Unions. But they have not come to much, in face of the isolation of most of the domestic workers either singly or in tiny groups. There are, however, every year a larger number of domestic workers in comparatively large institutions, such as hotels; and the most hopeful start could probably be made with workers of this type. Some institutional domestic workers, in the public services especially, are already organised in Trade Unions catering for municipal and other public employees. But a large field remains uncovered; and organisation is most likely to get an effective start if the T.U.C. takes the responsibility. The tendency to extend unemployment insurance farther across the frontiers of domestic service should also help to make organisation easier. But it will at best be difficult to reach the scattered domestics in private houses, though they stand—especially where only one servant is kept—in most need of all of a Union to protect their working conditions.

Minimum Living Costs

An interesting estimate of the increase in the cost of living during the past four years has been made by the women's section of the Labour Party. In July, 1933, the British Medical Association gave 22*s.* 6½*d.* per week as the cost of a minimum diet for a family of two adults and three children. Local party secretaries in 63 districts were instructed last November to reprice that diet on the basis of purchases from the cheapest available shops. The results show aggregate costs ranging from 28*s.* 6*d.* to 32*s.*, with eight reports giving a figure below and seven exceeding those limits. In typical industrial areas the mean figure is 30*s.*, an increase of approximately 33 per cent. as compared with July, 1933. This suggests that, since there has been no comparable increase in wage-rates, the numbers living on a diet below the B.M.A.'s admittedly meagre minimum must have increased greatly during the past four years. Incidentally, the official index of retail food prices rose in the same period by only 23 per cent.—a discrepancy which emphasises the urgency of the need for the revision of the index which the Ministry of Labour is now carrying out.

The Future of Rent Control

The Government has now appointed a Cabinet Committee to consider what is to be done about the Rent Restrictions Acts. It will be remembered that last month the majority of a Departmental Committee recommended a large measure of decontrol of "B" houses in the immediate future, and a gradual extinction of all control over the next ten years. The minority declared against any decision to end control at a particular date fixed in advance, and combated the view of the majority that, except where overcrowding (in an official sense) was severe, decontrol would not lead to any objectionable rise in rents for the poorer tenants. The Government has now to decide between these conflicting views, or to formulate an alternative proposal of its own. Undoubtedly, it would like to go with the majority; but dare it? Rent restriction is one of the few subjects on which the less political part of the electorate holds strong views; and the Government, unless it feels very sure of its majority, will probably think twice before it ventures to stir up the now dormant mass of non-party opinion.

Unplanned London

Building developments carried out with no regard for the social interest have brought troubles of several kinds for Londoners. The traffic arteries built to provide speedy egress from the Metropolis have been congested by ribbon-building; haphazard housing estates sprawling on the city's fringes between the Chilterns and the North Downs have gone far to render the belated conception of a green belt abortive in advance; and new centres of suburban population have been formed by the speculative builder with no regard to existing or prospective travelling facilities. The result is rush-hour overcrowding, which means daily purgatory for hundreds of thousands of workers and represents, in the words of the London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee, a "grossly wasteful and uneconomic" use of a traffic system which is over-taxed for two hours of the day and under-employed for the remainder. The milk has been spilt: the Committee has no constructive proposals to make beyond suggesting that in a few special cases—e.g., secondary schools—hours of work might be "staggered." It expresses the hope that in the case of future building developments there will be prior consultation between housing and traffic authorities; but the problem of unplanned London, swollen to its present unwieldy size and still growing, is beyond the Committee's scope. To limit London's unhealthy growth means diverting to other areas the light industries which electric power and accessibility to the country's largest market have attracted to the Thames valley. And that involves a policy of national planning which only the Government can undertake.

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GUNS TO THE RESCUE

UNCOMFORTABLE reflection though it be for patriots who believe that the pulse of Britain's economic life should be regulated by native enterprise and home-grown policies, it remains true that the material fortunes of this country during the year that lies ahead depend largely on the decisions of a foreigner. The recent trend of the indices of British production and employment suggests that we are in an early phase of a cyclical down-swing of capitalist business. Rearmament demand, actuating the iron and steel and important sections of the engineering industries, is functioning as a brake on the back-slip; but the process of lifting ourselves by our own braces, as we have done since 1932, is visibly at exhaustion point. The business situation can only be saved by a substantial increase of export trade. Such a consummation, however devout Mr. Chamberlain's hopes, will not be vouchsafed unless the present slump in the United States, which has immobilised 75 per cent. of American steel-producing plant, gives way to revival. The level of world prices and, in consequence, the purchasing power of Britain's overseas customers, depend on recovery in America. And the key to that riddle is in the pocket of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Such power has been held by few men whose reactions to events have been so unpredictable and so contradictory. Hailed by badly frightened American capitalism in 1932 as the one man whose spell-binding appeal could "stop the rot," the President proceeded to gather about him an executive personnel hot for economic experiments which aroused the antagonism of every vested interest. Announcing a new era of social justice, he repealed, in the N.R.A. enactments, the whole body of American anti-trust law. Declaring that prices must be reflated to the level of 1926, he decided last spring, when prices were still far below that level, to denounce profiteering and price inflation. Architect of recovery by "pump-priming"—i.e., by Federal expenditure, regardless of budgetary deficits, on relief, Veterans' bonuses and works—he decreed, a year ago, that there must be rigid Federal economy. Nonplussed by the sudden slump which developed when Treasury outgoings were curtailed while capitalist investment was still hanging fire, he declared, first, that the depression existed only in Wall Street's imagination, next, that capital had wickedly gone on strike, then that the one solution was to revive private enterprise. Rarely has the polito-economic compass been so boxed.

Political opportunist or idealist bewildered by realities only half-comprehended? For the contemporary observer it is difficult to pass assured verdict on the President. Beyond doubt, his innate sympathies are generous. It was not from considerations of electoral advantage alone that he gave indirect encouragement to Mr. John L. Lewis in the C.I.O.'s wage-lifting campaign a year ago. Anglophil by instinct, he has given full support to Mr. Cordell Hull's endeavour to negotiate—even (as seems likely) on a modest scale—a trade pact with Britain. His attempts, albeit abandoned for lack of public response, to lead America in the direction of closer co-operation with sister democracies against potential breakers of the world's peace, were sincerely meant. Yet, these points conceded, good intentions are unsatisfactory paving-stones for a political progress. Tested to-day by a problem from whose solution he was absolved, by the natural buoyancy of his country's economic life, when the New Deal first staggered three years ago, Mr. Roosevelt has acted this winter like a man vexed by the voices of too many counsellors, through whose din he must at all costs divine the whispers of a nation-wide electorate.

In the late autumn, with Wall Street's lugubrious threnody over the bare branches of industrial enterprise in his ears, the President appeared to be moving to the Right. His Chicago speech, calling for positive democratic collaboration against aggressors, was coldly received, as any effort to shake the popular isolationism was bound to be; but his "revive private enterprise" Message to the special session of Congress had a uniformly good press. He pleased the bankers by emphasising the magnitude of Federal economies and the desirability, nay, the imminence, of a balanced budget. He raised hopes in the suspicious breast of Big Business by hinting that wages—e.g., in the building industry—must be reduced, and by inviting into friendly conferences the leaders of the privately owned electricity power companies, whose "empires" were threatened by projected extensions of Federal power supply on Tennessee Valley Authority lines. In his Friday talks to the press he indicated that the anathematised taxes on capital gains and undistributed profits might be radically modified.

And then—what happened? Did the President recall, by afterthought, the enthusiasm for the New Deal displayed by Middle-West audiences during his autumn speech-making tour? Did his party managers suggest that, with the Congressional elections looming ahead, and unemployment marching to the twelve million mark, the best tactics would be to attack Big Business lest Big Business accuse the New Deal of responsibility for the depression? Surmise remains surmise. All that is known is that during the Christmas vacation the Attorney-General and the Secretary for the Interior were put up to deliver violent diatribes against monopolies, profiteering and feudal capitalism, to whose wrongdoing the blame for the slump was ascribed. Then, having relieved Wall Street by the studious moderation of the tone of his Message to the reassembly of Congress—a Message in which he emphasised the merits of the great majority of capitalists and complained only of exceptional "abuses" of money power—the President once more appeared to veer in his attitude last week-end, when he delivered a speech arraigning the principle of trustified holding companies in the electricity industry, and accusing the "four-inch tail" represented by Big Business of trying to wag the "ninety-six-inch dog" of national interest.

This marked change in his present attitude towards financial and industrial magnates, as compared with his conciliatory tone a month ago, is puzzling. It is intelligible that he should insist on the passage of his Bill to regulate minimum wages and maximum hours: reformism does not readily relinquish hopes of social betterment by consent. It is possible that he actually believes that, by maintaining farm incomes through crop restriction and raising the industrial workers' purchasing power at the expense of dearer manufactures, he can raise the national income from $68,000 millions to $100,000 millions, as he declares his intention of doing. It is conceivable that he ignores the fact that the real way to increase wealth per head is to increase national production as

well as to redistribute it. The question is still unanswered: Why has the President, having invited private enterprise to take the floor, suddenly kicked his guest downstairs?

The explanation is probably two-fold. Mr. Roosevelt is no Socialist; he has lately told the press that he hopes, in further friendly conferences with business executives, to demarcate the frontiers across which the State shall agree not to invade the empire of private enterprise. And a liberal reformist who aspires to ride the capitalist tiger may understandably feel inclined to give the animal a few thumping blows on the head—*pour l'encourager*—before mounting. But a more convincing reason for the President's fresh oratorical campaign against Big Business appears to lie in the nature of the Budget which he has submitted to Congress. Ostensibly there is to be no "pump-priming," *via* the social services in 1938–39. Economies are promised in relief and works expenditure. But, even so, the idea of balancing the Budget has been discarded; despite Mr. Secretary Morgenthau's Christmas promises of financial orthodoxy, a deficit of £200,000,000 is projected for next year—without making any provision for the increased cost of the rapidly rising army of unemployed, and before any additional appropriations are sought for the forthcoming naval and air force rearmament programme.

Mr. Roosevelt had to act. He found that he could not persuade private enterprise to take the initiative without jettisoning—to the outrage of his own instincts and at the cost of losing millions of C.I.O. votes—the vital principles of the New Deal. On the other hand, a fresh dose of Federal expenditure on 1933 lines was not certain to do the trick: the sight of a Budget hopelessly unbalanced once more by social expenditure might paralyse completely the already meagre activities of the capitalist entrepreneur. The alternative is to spend on arms and "more than somewhat." Focussed in this direction, Federal expenditure applies the needed stimulus to industry, and applies it in a way much more directly productive of capitalist profits than is the case when the Treasury purse-strings are loosed vaguely for "relief." On this basis Presidential homilies against capitalism's "abuses" can continue to tickle the ears of idealistically minded Democrats in the Middle-West: Wall Street's withers are unwrung, copper and armament shares are rising once again. Politically the President's strategy is adroit, but it is a queer ending to the "changed moral atmosphere" of the New Deal. Who would have said five years ago that the man who found America's economy of tottering brick would leave it not of marble but armour-plated by Bethlehem Steel?

INSIDE CHINA

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN NORTH CHINA]

IT is not possible, at this stage, to know where "North China" will end, how many provinces it will include or how it will be ruled. The question of area will be determined by the outcome of the war, but the question of government depends on many other factors, in which the military fortunes of Nanking are important but not decisive. For more than two months the Japanese have been trying to find some solution for the problem of governing North China, but so far without success. It was not until a year after the Mukden incident that the state of Manchukuo was formally inaugurated. Delay, therefore, is not in itself any guarantee that new methods will be applied to North China, but there are differences between the areas north and south of the Great Wall which are serious enough to make it highly unlikely that the northern provinces can be governed on the same model as Manchukuo. Here the spirit of nationalism and the will to resist are greater, economic life is far more closely bound up with that of the rest of China, the contact with Central China, the very heart of Chinese national life, is immediate; there are no natural "buffer" areas, no semi-autonomous provinces to deaden the force of the impact. Government, therefore, must be through the Chinese, and to find a Chinese who is both capable and willing to serve is no easy matter. He has not, so far, been discovered.

The present state of affairs cannot be considered permanent. The Japanese are forced to keep garrisons at every railway station and in every town of any size. They do not expect unorganised resistance from the peasantry, but the danger of organised guerilla warfare is constant. Nor will it be so simple to oppose this, as was done in Manchuria, by withdrawing all peasants to the towns during the winter, by which device no food or shelter remained for roving bands, because guerilla forces will be nearer to bases of supply in areas not under Japanese control. In order to avoid the necessity of keeping large forces tied up in North China, therefore, the Japanese must be prepared to give real power to a Chinese administration. It is in this direction that they are, at present, working. If they do not succeed they will be compelled to depend upon the costly method of direct military control, which, judging by present trends, remains the most likely outcome. For while it is not impossible that a group of Chinese may be found to inaugurate a separatist government it is highly unlikely, taking into account the ambitions of Japan in North China, that a Chinese government would be allowed, in practice, any real power. Nor is the general situation one which will tempt Japan to modify her aims in this part of the world.

The first and most obvious purposes of the Japanese are military. The main task has been to drive Chinese armies out of North China, a task which cost them more in men and materials than was expected and even now amounts to little more than control of the railways and big towns. Lines of communication are protected by making village headmen responsible, on pain of death, for given stretches of military telephones and railway lines. Villages which were suspected of having been under Communist influence were wiped out. Shoot first and inquire afterwards is the rule outside the big cities: farmers cannot tell you why their friends were shot; the most probable explanation is that they did not understand orders given in Japanese or bad Chinese. Against unorganised peasantry terrorisation is successful, but this method is giving way more and more to the principle of joint responsibility of the family or village for the actions of their members. And it is this kind of rule that North China can expect. By this method large "colonial" armies can be built up, as they have been in Manchuria, even among a hostile population. No "Manchukuo" soldier, for example, is seriously tempted to shoot his Japanese officer when he knows that his whole family will be shot in reprisal. In this way Japan can expect to acquire man power for the future struggle with the U.S.S.R.; this is the Chinese "raw material" which is never mentioned but is of supreme importance.

Chinese man power is used at the moment for other purposes. Work has already been started on railway construction and road building on which prisoners of war are employed, in the usual way. But the farmer is a different problem; he must first be tempted by the promise of payment and then retained, without payment, under military guard. Sometimes other methods are used, such as forced labour, quite openly, and those who are incapable of physical work must provide a substitute or make a money contribution. The new roads and railways, however, are not likely to bring any economic betterment to those who are forced to build them: they are purely military and strategic in purpose. One railway has already been started from Tungchow, near Peking, to Kupeikou, the entrance to Jehol province; another will run

from Kalgan to the north-west, while military roads are being pushed out in all directions. Some of these are necessary in order to hold North China, but most of them have significance only in relation to a possible conflict with the U.S.S.R.

The military purposes of Japanese imperialism always predominate over the economic, in fact most of the economic activities can be explained by reference to the ideal of military supremacy. Japan is terrified of sanctions. Political control of certain sources of raw material is therefore, in this sense, essential to her national security. And her use of military control is further encouraged by the fact that she lacks the economic and financial power to compete with England and the U.S.A. in China; she must compete by closing the door and breaking up Chinese unity. Although there is some basis in fact, therefore, for the Japanese assertion that the Chinese were not developing North China, that cotton production, for example, could not be developed because there were no roads and railways to market it, that adequate steps were not being taken to improve cotton staples or prevent adulteration of the product, the determination of the Japanese to remedy these things cannot be explained in terms of "economic co-operation." But the economic plans of the Japanese must not be under-estimated, even if they are designed with military ends in view.

The most important political consequence of the economic schemes for North China is that the Japanese must control the sources of revenue, particularly the land tax, if they are to direct economic development. And this means in practice control of the whole administrative machine down to the smallest units, the hsien. At the moment nothing like this has been attempted. Control of the customs, of the post office, police forces, railway administration and inland revenue is already a fact, but Chinese personnel has not, so far, been replaced, as in Manchuria, by Japanese. Business has hardly been touched and Chinese companies still operate buses and trams, theatres and restaurants, hotels and shops. It will be some time before Japan can tighten her grip on the economic life of North China, but the South Manchuria Railway Company, which dominates Manchuria, is already making plans for electrical development, coal-mining and light industries. Germany and Italy are promised a large share in this programme. But where is the money coming from? Certainly not from Japan and hardly from her allies. Something can be done by bartering soya beans for heavy machinery. Something can be done by diverting Chinese revenues into new channels, but there is no reason to anticipate any more economic development in North China than in Manchuria, if as much. We can, however, expect to witness the extension of the principle of the "closed door" and the gradual elimination of English and American business enterprise in this area.

It will be some time before these things happen. Meanwhile, the atmosphere of the "police state" is already with us. Mail coming via Siberia is delivered fairly promptly considering that most of it is opened. American mail is months behind and there is good reason to believe that much of it was destroyed in the early days of the conflict. Outgoing letters are the most severely censored. At one time the Post Office advertised in the local press that it could not find the right envelopes for the right letters and the owners were asked to assist. Only two universities are open, both under the American flag. Middle schools which have reopened have been warned that they will be immediately closed if they do not obey orders. There are spies everywhere; one must talk guardedly over the telephone, in buses and public meetings. Nor are things limited to prohibitions. All shops are forced to fly Japanese flags, memorial arches and huge posters are erected to celebrate common rejoicing in Japanese victories, village headmen are compelled to feast and welcome the deliverers, and middle-school students, with machine-guns trained on them, are forced to shout anti-Nanking slogans. There seems to be no limits to the stupidity of some Japanese in their treatment of the conquered people.

The Chinese have their compensations. Contempt for the Japanese comes easily and naturally to the more cultured race, but this is the first time that the Chinese have experienced the self-respect which comes from determined resistance. The educated classes, especially, have undergone a complete change of attitude. They are completely converted to the idea of military resistance and, more important, to the rule of Chiang Kai Shek and the Nanking Government. This was not true a year ago. If Chiang compromises with the Japanese he will find the task of repression even more severe than it was in 1927. The lowest coolie hates the conqueror. Meanwhile, "Volunteers" are being organised. To be successful they must first gain the confidence of the peasantry; to do this it is essential to eliminate ordinary banditry. This work is going on slowly but when these two conditions are fulfilled we can expect serious guerilla resistance even in the north.

A LONDON DIARY

How did the philosopher come to think that man is an animal that seeks pleasure and avoids pain? I put this question to an unknown warrior, as side by side we toiled with a contorted crab-like motion up a frozen mountain in a biting wind, only to slide down again in a helpless tangle to the accompaniment of the caustic comments of an attendant demon. Pleasure? There can be no pleasure so hardly won, so austere, so dangerously indistinguishable from pain as ski-ing. If you do not sprain your ankle (as I did early in the proceedings) you break your leg, and if you do chance to keep your limbs whole, you still pass long hours of humiliating and painful effort in very uncomfortable circumstances, when you might be spending your week's holiday at much less cost, reading or sleeping by a warm fire, with a cat curled up on the mat . . . Man is a masochistic animal.

* * *

No, ski-ing is not a pleasure (though to be honest I must admit that I love it). It is a religion—one of the fashionable (winter) religions of our time. Its discipline, its humiliations, its austerities are, I am sure, part of its attraction. In these days the bourgeoisie seek not comfort, but something that makes them feel violently alive and something in which they run risks—mild ones preferably—under orders. (There is an excellent doctor with a most up-to-date X-ray machine in his surgery waiting at the bottom of the run, where you can take your broken bones.) They like the routine of ski-ing too. One must be at one's lesson by 10 o'clock in the morning; it is with a praiseworthy effort that one lasts until 4.0 in the afternoon. All day long the nursery slopes ring with the stern cry of the officiating priest, "Ben' ze knees, lady! More ben' ze knees, lady." And bend the knees they do, these ardent devotees who have long ceased to bow in any other place of worship. Afterwards there are compensations: the glow that comes from effort; the fashionable tan that does not look natural when put on with lotion; the dances in the evening; the hope that on return to London or Budapest other less exciting ways of slimming will be unnecessary. And then it gives one quite a lot to talk about, too. Why, the dear Duchess will be out there next week; the Countess X only left a few days ago; and Schiaparelli, with her attendant dachshund, was to be seen passing daily in the most wonderful grey trousers and long brilliant orange gloves.

* * *

Once again there is a sturdy crop of rumours about a General Election in 1938—May is the favourite month. One paper points out triumphantly that it made this prophecy a couple of months ago and, as a proof that it is "first with the news," points out that other papers are now belatedly discussing the same possibility. Well, if it sticks to these tactics it is bound to be right sometime. People have forgotten that it also foretold a General Election for 1937. (It is an old technique. Horatio Bottomley, I believe, was the only person who correctly foretold the date of the end of the war of 1914–18—a feat which becomes less remarkable when we

recall that he always said it would " be over in six months." This eventually proved correct.) Of course, this new prophecy of an election may prove right. Mr. Chamberlain may have no other way of getting rid of all the misfits in his Cabinet. But I have become sceptical of such prophecies. The pundits calculate the wisdom of an early election: the Government is more likely to be unpopular if it holds on, prices and unemployment will go up, and so forth. Fair considerations which seldom, when it comes down to it, outweigh the reasons Cabinet Ministers have for holding on as long as possible. The reasons include the inertia of those who sit pretty already, the righteous desire to finish the Bills and jobs they are on and the dislike of risking their salaries until they have to. No, governments always begin to talk about resigning in their third year of office; they actually resign when they are compelled to, and not before.

* * *

I begin to wonder whether M. van Zeeland's report to the British and French Governments will ever see the light of day. Having spent nine months in studying the possibilities of removing trade barriers, the former Prime Minister of Belgium submitted his provisional conclusions to Mr. Chamberlain last week-end. The cardinal point of his thesis appears to be that it is no use talking about liberalisation of world trade so long as two Great Powers—Germany and Italy—maintain a system of rigid import restriction and exchange control; but the only chance of inducing the autarkist countries to open their frontiers to the free flow of goods and money is to offer them solid material compensation. So far the report harmonises with the views of that section of opinion in the City and at Westminster which believes that " credits " are a panacea capable of solving Europe's political deadlock. But M. van Zeeland, for all that his talents lie in financial *expertise* rather than statecraft, has recognised that a direct Anglo-Franco-American loan to the Berlin-Rome axis is politically off the map, and is indeed barred, in the case of the U.S.A., by the Johnston (Foreign Lending) Act. Hence an ingenious proposal—that there should be a Five Power declaration in favour of exchange stability, followed by relaxation of German and Italian controls over imports and *devisen;* that Britain, France and the U.S.A. should contribute gold to establish a sort of super-Equalisation Account in the hands of the Bank for International Settlements at Bâle; and that this account should be used to support the exchange of any country whose enlarged imports threaten its currency's stability.

* * *

Well wrapped up with impressive monetary formulae, the scheme might appeal to believers in the theory that economic must precede political appeasement; but, for all its ingenuity, I cannot see either side accepting it. The dictatorships are well aware that, with the political cards dealt as at present, removal of exchange restrictions would lead to wholesale flight of capital. Moreover, though Mussolini might be willing to make concessions of autarkist principle for badly needed hard cash, self-sufficiency has been so publicised in Germany as an integral part of Nazi faith that its abandonment would cost the régime dearly in prestige, apart from the fact that it is an essential element in war-preparedness. On the other side, though Mr. Chamberlain is known to be anxious to establish better Anglo-German relations, public opinion in the three countries invited to contribute to the gold pool would never stand for the scheme when its implications were realised. For its immediate effect would be to place Germany and Italy in a position to build up war reserves of raw materials from abroad and to call upon the B.I.S. to make good the resulting deficiencies in their balance of payments. The official funds of the three democracies would, under this thin disguise, simply be financing Nazi-Fascist armaments. The idea of economic assistance being eventually forthcoming as part of a general European political settlement is one which might appropriately be held out to Germany and Italy; but, as an isolated step, M. van Zeeland's scheme is foredoomed to be a " flop." For its author's sake it is to be hoped that its destiny for the time being will be a pigeon-hole.

* * *

Mr. Ade of Eltham College has completed his three weeks' sentence in Brixton (with two days' remission for good behaviour). As it is unlikely that he will be the only pacifist to go to prison for refusing to pay the proportion of his income tax which he regards as an exaction for armaments, his experience is of interest as a precedent. He gives very high marks to the warders and very low marks to the food. His razor was returned to him quite soon after his reception in prison—an important mark of confidence. He was at first only allowed a book chosen for him out of the library, but was soon permitted to choose for himself. Some 150 letters were sent to him, and apparently because it was Christmas, he was allowed to receive about 50 of them, though I should not have expected the regulations to provide for more than a couple. Now that Mr. Ade is released several interesting questions arise. Will the authorities still try to recover the balance Mr. Ade refused to pay this year, or will they consider that his imprisonment wipes it out until next income tax return?

* * *

Last week, commenting upon the vendetta against the Director of the National Gallery, Polycritic referred to " Mr. Bell, an ex-museum official." It was not thought that anyone could confuse this gentleman with Mr. Clive Bell, Mr. Graham Bell, Mr. Kenneth Bell, Mr. Quentin Bell, or any other of the carillon of Bells who peal in this journal. But some people have made this mistake—a mistake particularly annoying to our art-critics, Mr. Clive and Mr. Graham Bell, because they violently disagree with Mr. C. F. Bell's disparagement of the Giorgionesque panels in question.

* * *

" Teruel? " I asked my friend who has travelled much in Spain. " What sort of a place was it before the siege? Now I suppose it is a heap of ruins. Was it a pleasant place before? " He replied: " I once spent a night there. I remember it as a draughty, undistinguished town. And in the bedroom of the hotel where I slept there was a notice which ran: *' Guests are requested not to clean their boots on the counterpane and not to play the mandoline after midnight.'* " CRITIC.

SPANISH RELIEF

WE are glad to acknowledge the receipt of the following sums sent to us during the last fortnight for Spanish relief. The money (£149 4*s.* 6*d.*) has been spent on two tons of dried milk, which is being loaded on a ship leaving for Barcelona at the end of this week. This milk will be distributed by British and Spanish authorities collaborating in relief work in Catalonia. Help is urgently needed.

We shall be pleased to acknowledge further sums received for relief work in Catalonia, and also for support of the Basque children who still remain in this country. Out of the original 3,800, some 900 have been returned to their parents and this nearly completes the number for whose return application has so far been made. It looks as if more than 2,500 children may have to be supported in this country for a considerable further period.

Sums received:

Madge Pulsford (£10). R. S. B. Simmonds (£6). J. N. Poole, Dr. Harry Schütze (£5 5*s.*). Margaret I. Cole, Elizabeth FitzPatrick, A. C. Jardine, Hilda C. Jones, Prof. Herbert Reilly, E. L. Robertson, Ralph Royle, B. W. Swithinbank, Dorothy Walker (£5). M. Gilchrist Wilson (£4). Dr. Ursula Cox, C. H. Leach (£3). Henry Ashwin, Eustace Charlton, A. E. Hammer, Mr. and Mrs. Ure, W. H. Wale (£2 2*s.*). Janet Lewis, Mrs. C. L. Pissaro, Mrs. C. M. Merrifield, J. Tried (£2). M. D., Sam Heppner (£1 10*s.*). Jean Aitken, C. G. Bennett, H. E. Bourne, L. A. Bradbury, J. V. Broome, Dorothy W. Coleman, R. C. Cross, F. G. Howard, Bessie Jassell, R. Bruce Lockhart, Grace C. Munro, C. H. O., Mrs. M. Buckland Wright, John E. Yerbury (£1 1*s.*). Anon., Joyce E. Haycock, H. E. Hubble, Phoebe G. Lord, M. I. Machin, Miss E. S. Montgomery, Phoebe D. Pool, " A Rothesay Friend," W. H. Simons, H. Stern, Jean M. Thompson, H. J.

Townshend, F. F. Turnbull, D. G. Waddilove, A. M. Webb (£1). Sylvia Beaufort-Palmer, Ruth Cape and Edith Pearson, L. Peirson (15s.). W. B. Laing, A. E. Lauder, Canon C. H. Norton (10s. 6d.). Anon., John Blake, Frank Cave, Chester City and County School for Girls, C. and L. Friend, Lois Gatliff, M. S. Hall-Kenney, A. K. Hamilton Jenkin, Eileen Leach, "Old Subscriber," Mrs. E. A. Osmund, The Pugmire Family, John Rhodes, The Misses Sketchley, M. P. Varco, E. Willmore (10s.). Marie Jeaffreson, Miss V. Samuel (7s. 6d.). Anon., C. H. Bond (6s.). Anon., M. E. Booth, Mrs. M. E. Carmichael, J. Goldman, S. E. Jefferson, F. Keighley, Cynthia Matthew, R. B. Morse, M. Snow, Joan M. Sykes (5s.). W. A. Burbridge, W. S. Candy, S. K. Mundy, Kathleen Watson (2s. 6d.). Anon., Mrs. N. E. Minett, Clare and G. H. Pollard (2s.). F. G. Clarke (1s.).

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Miss J. I. Kellett.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

Like so many men whose education is part English and part Continental, he never succeeded in achieving that serenity of spirit and mind which is one of the blessings of an undefiled English public school education.—On Somerset Maugham, by "Atticus," *Sunday Times.*

Omens of 1937 . . . The fact that the Gravesend Town Council opened their proceedings with prayer for the first time for over three hundred years.—*Observer.*

Dr. —— said that he found that all the children were dirty and undernourished. Cross-examining the doctor, Mrs. —— said: "Do you think I have had a fair chance in trying to keep seven children on 30s. a week? I have had six children in six years and two months and I am run-down and ill. Do you think I am in a state to look after them?" The doctor replied, "Yes."—*Bulletin.*

Although no "naval race" with Mussolini will be undertaken, it is the policy of the British Cabinet to maintain naval superiority in the Mediterranean over any nation or any likely combination of nations.

It will be made clear that Britain is prepared to "go one better" than any other country in sea or air armaments. The coming year's naval programme will be by far the biggest ever undertaken.—*Sunday Express.*

I am a shy, retiring sort of chap, and not a great success at parties. The girls all flock round a man I know who can waggle his ears. How is it done? Or can anyone suggest an equally successful party trick?—Wallflower, Manchester.—Letter in *Daily Sketch.*

Mok, the Zoo gorilla, was slightly better yesterday evening. More than one visitor has wished to say prayers over him and try the effects of faith-healing.—*Daily Telegraph.*

ON THE AVERAGE MAN

MANY people hold that the average man does not exist. He is a creature, they say, like the economic man, the dragon, the centaur, and other figments of the primitive imagination; and you will seek for him in vain even in the remotest parts of the five continents. This is an age of faith, however, and it may not be long before we get back to belief in the old myths. We have already recovered our faith in astrology, and, if we can believe in astrology, is it going very much farther to believe in the existence of the centaur and of the average man? The *Daily Express* has already set out on a quest for him; and, in order that its readers may be able to recognise him if they meet him lurking in England, has provided them with as many particulars of his appearance and habits as we were given some time ago of the appearance and habits of the Loch Ness Monster.

He is, according to the latest reports, exactly 5 feet $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches high, and weighs 11 stone 1 pound. He has brown hair and eyes, and his size in shoes is 8. Of these shoes, he has two pair, and each pair costs ten shillings. His size in hats is $6\frac{7}{8}$–7, and he has one child. He is 33 years old, and, at the age of 27 years and 4 months, he married a woman who at the time was 25 years and 6 months old. He possesses three suits, one of them a working suit and one of them a week-end suit. His favourite colours are grey and blue, though in overcoats he inclines to blue or black, and in hats to a brown felt or bowler. He lives in a town of more than 50,000 inhabitants, and spends £330 a year. Also he suffers from rheumatism. All we need now is an impression of his fingerprints, and, with this in our possession, we ought not to need to call in the help of Scotland Yard to find him, if he exists at all.

I confess I have never met the average man. The Dartford warbler I have seen and the golden oriole, but the average man has always eluded me. There have been times when I thought I had found him at last, but invariably my man, on examination, proved to have blue eyes or was wearing a black hat or had married at the wrong age. The inside measurement of his trousers was right—$30\frac{1}{2}$ inches—but, he was not suffering from rheumatism. He had too many children or too few, and he had married a woman of the wrong age. In the end I came to the conclusion that the average man does not exist. He perished, I am confident, with Atlantis, and no Stanley will ever succeed in discovering him. I should like to see Mr. Peter Fleming leading an expedition in search of him. Not that I think that Mr. Fleming would find him, but I should like to read his book about his adventures during the quest.

But, even if the average man did exist, would it be worth while discovering him? Is there a single capacity in which the average man is the person whom one would choose to do a job that needed to be done well? Few of us would call in an average man as a doctor or would care to be defended by an average man in the law-courts. Few women could fall in love with the average man, or, if they did, they would not think him so. There is a line in a song which runs: "Every nice girl loves an average adjuster." Change the line into "Every nice girl loves an average man," and it becomes manifestly and ludicrously untrue. The average man, I will agree, is often well spoken of in a vague way. We say, "The average man is a decent fellow," or "The average man is fundamentally sound," or "The average man is kind to animals." But that our praise of the average man is little more than sentimentalism is shown by the fact that, when there is a responsible and well-paid position to be filled, no one ever advertises for an average man to fill it. Taking a casual glance at the advertisement columns in the *Times*, I find a Birmingham engineering company proclaiming their urgent need for Universal and Surface Grinders, but adding the cruel sentence: "Only first-class men need apply." Even the Royal Air Force, in its advertisement for pilots, makes it clear that the average man is not wanted, since the pilots must, unlike the average man, be unmarried and must be between $17\frac{1}{2}$ and 25 years of age. If the average man existed, it is clear, he would soon discover that, while everyone speaks well of him, nobody loves him.

Sometimes I wish that he did not exist even as a myth. As a myth, he has, I am sure, done infinite harm, since, though no manufacturer wishes to employ him, many manufacturers regard him as the customer whose tastes must be especially catered for. Is not the decline in the quality of the average biscuit in the last two generations, for example, due to the fact that a number of biscuit-manufacturers concentrated on the task of pleasing, or appeasing, the average man? Take the history of the cinema, again. Film-magnates, believing in the myth of the average man, and believing him to be a curious mixture of sound morals and sensual thoughts, set out straightway to feed his imagination with the greatest rubbish that has ever been offered to human beings in any of the arts. If there is an art of the films at all, indeed, this is due to the fact that a few people realised that the average man is as

mythical a being as Father Christmas and that intelligence is one of the common characteristics of men, women and even children. It seems to be inevitable that, if you believe in the existence of the average man, you must regard him with contempt.

If the average man did exist, however, and if average men formed nine-tenths of the population, as some suppose them to do, what a power he would be! A League of Average Men, led by an average man, could conquer the world. "Average Men of All Lands, Unite!"—what a slogan to reform the world with! It may be replied that any theory of democracy must imply the existence of the average man, and that government of the average man by the average man for the average man is the democratic ideal. I do not believe, however, that democracy can be founded on a myth. Fortunately or unfortunately, the people is not composed of average men, but of individuals who are even more unlike each other than peas seen through a magnifying glass. That is one of the difficulties of democratic government. If most men were average men, they would automatically combine to bring about a mechanical Utopia in a week.

I wish that the *Daily Express*, believing as it does in the average man, had told us even more about him. Does he, for example, like Shakespeare? Is the crowd at the Old Vic made up of average men or of eccentrics? Does the average man really like cod and hake? Has he a sense of humour? Does he know the difference between good port and bad? Was it he who bought all the sets of Dickens from the newspapers a year or two ago? Is the proportion of average men in the crowd at an Association football match greater than in the crowd at a game of Rugby; and how can one tell? Is it the average man who bets in the football pools? I ask this because everybody I know, except myself and a few clergymen seems to bet in the football pools, and not a single one of them looks like an average man. It is the same with the beer-drinkers I know. All of them seem to me in some respects to be exceptional people. Even the readers of newspapers are in many respects exceptional people. The newspaper which catered, like the worst of the biscuit firms, solely for the average man, would find its circulation going.

The fact is, of course, that, even if the average man existed, he would be bound to be in a hopeless minority. I have assumed in an earlier paragraph that, if he existed, he and his fellows would form a majority of the population, but this, of course, is impossible since the average man is, the *Daily Express* tells us, 33 years of age. Now the ordinary man, as opposed to the average man, is either below or above 33 years of age; and hence it is obvious that, in any contest between the ordinary man and the average man, the ordinary man must win through sheer force of numbers. And, while the ranks of the ordinary man are continually increasing, the ranks of the average man are being continually depleted; for, even if you have all the other characteristics of the average man, including rheumatism and a fancy for brown felt or bowler hats, you cannot with the best will in the world be an average man for more than a single year. Reach the age of 34, and you are cast out from the fold as an abnormality.

This being so, is it worth while catering for the average man even if he exists? I notice that the *Daily Express* promises that, if it discovers the average man, or the claimant closely resembling the average man, it will "invite him to give his views on current topics and matters of interest." I notice also, however, that it does not offer to give him a job as leader-writer, cartoonist or racing expert. This, I think, is significant. It suggests that even those who believe in the existence of the average man have no confidence in him. Is it not better, however, to submit to the evidence and accept the fact that the average man either does not exist or is unique? I challenge any newspaper proprietor to bring out a daily paper written about the average man by the average man for the average man. He will soon discover that he has no news, no staff, and a circulation of at most one reader 33 years of age who suffers from rheumatism.

Y. Y.

CIVILISATION AND SOIL

THE cradle of civilisation was the fringe surrounding the deserts of Asia—some of the driest and most inhospitable regions in which life can exist at all. Several theories have been advanced to explain why civilisation should have taken root in what at first sight might appear to be the least auspicious of all parts of the earth for its success. It has been suggested that the climate was particularly stimulating, that it was moister than at the present time, and that the soils were exceptionally fertile. There is doubtless truth in some of these suggestions, but the fact remains that no early civilisation succeeded on what to-day we should consider more favourable terrains supplied with ample water, luxuriant plant and animal life, and temperate climates. There is perhaps more truth in the suggestion that early civilisations succeeded in establishing themselves on these naturally poor lands simply because of that natural poverty. The first thing that mankind had to accomplish before it could form a stable, organised community was to wrest control of the soil from the natural vegetation, and to primitive men that was only possible on the sparsely clad soils of the desert fringe. The steppes and the forests remained unconquerable, inhabited by nomads and shifting cultivators, who could temporarily utilise the soil for their needs but were continually moved on by the pressure of the resurgent natural vegetation.

If we regard civilisation objectively as an ecological phenomenon in which men, instead of plants, become the dominant form of life over a region, we can distinguish in the evolution of civilisation successive stages as mankind, with its increasing powers of organisation, secured control over regions dominated by different vegetation types. The semi-desert civilisation type was succeeded by the Mediterranean-forest type, which in its turn gave way to the present humid, temperate-forest type. Within the last hundred years civilisation has made a determined attempt to gain control over the Continental grasslands, but, except for building a flimsy network of railways, roads and cities, has made little headway in the sense that mankind can claim to be dominant over prairies or steppes. The present type of civilisation, notwithstanding outward appearances to the contrary, has not been an ecological success except on the forest soil where it has slowly been evolving for a thousand years.

There have so far been two main types of civilisation which are sharply distinguished ecologically—the semi-desert type and the temperate-forest type. The Mediterranean-forest type is intermediate between these two. Now, there was a very close connection between the type of soil and the type of vegetation that existed in prehistoric times before men became dominant. The semi-desert soils were saline and supported a halophytic, salt-tolerant vegetation, the temperate-forest soils were characterised in general by being somewhat richer below than at the surface, so that deep-rooting trees had a natural advantage in competition with shallow-rooting plants. The semi-desert soils had too much plant food, the forest soils too little, for agricultural crops competing with the natural flora. The process of civilisation consisted essentially in converting the original regional soil type into an agricultural soil, and in particular into a soil suited for the Gramineae (grains and grasses). The type of civilisation depended upon the nature of the processes required for this conversion; the removal of excessive soil salinity was the basis of the evolution of early Asiatic civilisations, as the maintenance of a plant-food supply sufficient to give graminaceous an advantage over forest plants was the basis of the evolution of European civilisation.

The semi-desert civilisations were based on irrigation which, besides supplying water, washed out the soil salts and permitted salt-intolerant grain crops to grow. The continuance of a society based on irrigation depended upon its being able to control the salt and moisture content of the soil. The supply of irrigation water was limited, and both over- and under-irrigation were harmful to the soil, although when properly applied irrigation gave men the most complete

control over the land and its produce that they have ever had. Under these conditions, individual freedom in the management of land would have been fatal to the maintenance of human dominance and to the stability of the community. Irrigation civilisations could only have evolved under some despotic form of government in which the despot was identified with, and had supreme control over the productivity of the State.

Very different conditions prevailed on European forest lands, where the soils were not only extraordinarily variable but also required a great deal more improvement to convert them to agricultural soils than did the arid soils which needed merely a regulated addition of water. Each field, so to speak, presented a different problem—far too many in all and too variable for a despot to solve—whence may be traced the appearance and growth of democracy in Europe. More significant in history has been the fact that a forest soil required perpetual improvement and individual care if it was to become and remain an agricultural soil. Given a free rein, the Babylonian farmer would certainly have over-irrigated for the sake of a quick profit while his weaker neighbour would have had to under-irrigate, and the land of both would have suffered. On the other hand, the conversion of primeval-forest land to agriculture was such a slow and difficult process that there was little danger of the soil being exploited and exhausted. Agricultural profit, indeed, could only be extracted from a forest soil by permanently improving it, and the more it was improved the greater was the profit. The best way to form a settled agricultural society on heterogeneous forest soils was to let each occupier of land do the best for himself, since thereby he would improve the land and do the best for the community also. Civilisation progressed but little in Western Europe until the feudalism characteristic of the Mediterranean-forest type of civilisation gave way to a capitalism which induced individual freeholders, with the prospects of personal profit, to improve the land and to make the position of mankind impregnable against the encroachment of the forest. Some form of individual capitalism was as necessary to transform a humid forest environment as despotism was to transform a desert environment into a habitat fit for civilisation where mankind could maintain its supremacy over the plant world.

A despotic human community formed as natural a complement as a halophytic plant community to saline soils. But the consequences of establishing a civilisation on saline soils was gradually to change the nature of the soils until the initial correspondence between soil and civilisation types no longer existed, the civilisation declined, and mankind lost its supremacy over the soil. There is some evidence that the same sequence of events may take place on forest soils. Capitalism can raise forest soils to a certain maximum agricultural productivity. Thereafter, by the operation of the law of diminishing returns, it will become exploitative and destructive rather than constructive of soil fertility; the soils will have lost the essential characteristics of forest soils and will be better adapted to a different type of biological community. Western Europe must now be very near the peak of maximum fertility attainable under capitalism, but it is not yet possible to state whether it is still approaching or has already passed the peak.

During the last century European civilisation has planted the mature tree of capitalism in every quarter of the world, mostly on soils entirely different from the temperate-forest soils on which capitalism gradually evolved, and, from what we know of their nature, entirely unsuitable for the evolution of a capitalistic civilisation. In particular, a civilisation with a strongly capitalistic basis has taken root and grown (perhaps too grossly to be healthy) on the grassland soils of America. The result has been progressive soil exhaustion on a scale unprecedented in history for its rapidity and extent. Stated in very general terms, the outstanding characteristic of these grassland soils is that they are—or were—almost ideal for agriculture in their natural state, and working them for unrestricted individual profit without first having to improve them was bound to lead to accelerating deterioration, especially with modern scientific and mechanical technique. Hitherto, the process of civilisation, so far as the land was concerned, has consisted in making non-agricultural soils suitable for agricultural crops, and this profound change in the natural environment resulted in the evolution of despotic, feudal or capitalistic societies, according to the nature of the original soil.

What kind of civilisation can be evolved on land which is already well suited to agricultural crops and is actually dominated by indigenous Gramineae? Grass produces the ideal agricultural soil, and any system of land utilisation that will enable man to oust grass from its dominant position seems destined to result in soil deterioration. Perhaps some scheme will be evolved which will enable an unprogressive but enduring civilisation to exist in static equilibrium with the soil, as Egyptian civilisation existed for 6,000 years. Perhaps agriculture will change entirely and require a type of soil different from what it has required since the dawn of history. Perhaps the present soils will be destroyed by capitalism, and a new civilisation will arise to build up the man-made deserts to new fertility. In any case, none of the well-tried systems of social organisation appears to be adapted to maintain the fertility of continental grassland soils. The Russian steppes destroyed feudalism after centuries of slow retrogression, rejected capitalism after a few years' experience of it, and are now trying socialism—with what success we cannot yet gauge.

Nor are the great political units of Eurasia and North America homogeneous with respect to soils and vegetation. Socialism has spread on to the forest soils of North Russia where capitalism was not a complete failure, and in some parts of eastern North America capitalism has definitely improved the former forest soils. On ecological grounds it is open to doubt whether fully "civilised" forest-soil and grassland-soil regions could be amalgamated politically. More probably, at some future date, new political boundaries stretched across the continents will mark the last frontiers where, in the nineteenth century, forests and grasses struggled for possession of the soil.

G. V. JACKS

RECESSIONAL

No, there isn't a slump,
Just a healthy recession.
Though shares fall with a bump,
No, there isn't a slump;
It's not trade but the hump
That creates a depression.
No, there isn't a slump,
Just a healthy recession.

SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

SIR,—Since I could have answered some of the questions in your General Knowledge paper I am prejudiced in its favour, and ought not to take part in this discussion. But I do want to know whether the temper displayed in Professor Hogben's letter was the scientific temper, and I am hoping that one of his fellow scientists will tell us.

I hope too that this correspondence is being watched by Mass-observationists, for Christmas 1937 seems to have been spent in several different ways. I spent mine in helping to cook a duck, Professor Hogben his in trying to cook the nether portions of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION'S goose. How THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION itself spent Christmas is conjecturable: unplucked in front but basted well behind it must have been in two minds how to react. I trust that it will continue to have two minds, and that if there is a Christmas 1938 it will again give its readers (*a*) ruthless analysis, and (*b*) cultured tradition. Both

of these are, in my judgment, essentials of democracy, and it puzzles me that anyone who calls himself a democrat should try to make trouble between them. E. M. FORSTER

Reform Club, S.W.1.

SIR,—Aesop's fable of the tailless fox seems to be a bit of the decadent Mediterranean culture unknown to Professor Hogben and Dr. Hatfield; yet it applies as well to those scientists who are fiercely and pedantically ignorant of "Art" as to those literary persons who are self-defensively ignorant of "Science." I am unable to argue about the political implications of knowing how much of an iceberg is submerged, what fatted imperial peacocks, or who Lord Eardley was. But would your correspondents deny that even in the clockwork and cleanly utopias of the unexploded future, the ability to find out things from works of reference may be among the benefits derived from education? Is it a respectable attitude to refuse to employ available apparatus because a question is "not my subject"; or is this rather the self-approving ignorance of the bigot? It is amusing that the "new ('inductive') science" of the Renaissance should have demolished one form of priggish obscurantism only to put another in its place: that the lofty contempt of the old "classic" for anything "practical" should now reappear in the laboratory, as the stock attitude towards everything that might be called "arty." Such feelings can only produce a "culture" in the bacteriological sense: a one-idea'd country of the blind.

To remove a possible misapprehension, I had better say that I thought your paper bad on Science. I was given a scientific education, and am glad of it. But I am even more glad that it did not stop there. A. P.-R.

University College, Durham.

SIR,—Since Charles Lamb complained about it, Englishmen have become accustomed to the earnest pedantry with which their northern conquerors conduct post mortems on their exploits in verbal thrift. So I have no complaint to add, when Mr. Brogan undertakes an instructive (if protracted) exegesis of my reference to the times of Burke and Brumaire *vis-à-vis* pen and sword. If the deliberate order in which my words gave notice of a double antithesis was not enough, Mr. Brogan's fellow countrymen ("practically completely free from the political sin of modesty") will welcome his assurance that November 9th, 1799, was not a triumph of the pen.

None the less, two points in his letter prompt me to comment with the same earnestness. He refers to the "wishful building up of the self-esteem of the English middle classes to which Mr. Wells devoted himself with praiseworthy zeal, if limited success." If we assume that praiseworthy in this context is "practically completely" free from irony, are we to draw the conclusion that the literary and legalistic intelligentsia of the Labour Party have been illimitably successful in their professed efforts to engage the self-esteem of the lower middle class on behalf of Socialism? Alternatively, must we conclude that they have been foolish to make the attempt?

Possibly Mr. Brogan would say that they have. Speaking of his own fellow countrymen, he says that their "freedom from the social fears and resentments of their English equivalents is not without its drawbacks." The drawback disclosed in the next sentence is that Mr. Brogan finds "life easier in England than in his native land." Self exposure of this sort is a godsend to Fascism—not to say, to Scottish nationalism. Constructive politics calls for intellectual leaders who can interpret the aspirations and needs of ordinary people, because they understand and *sympathise* with them. The anti-rationalistic temper of Fascist propaganda feeds on Left-wing sentiment which is merely an alibi for the self-conscious intellectualism of the metropolitan misfit and the *déclassé* don.

If I have spoiled Y. Y.'s dinner I regret it, because (unlike many other writers in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION) he is nearly always amusing, and never sets out to show you what a clever fellow he is. I suppose that his irony is directed against the "setter," when he asks: "For whom does Professor Hogben cater? Is it not perhaps for the intelligent student of science just as the setter of the *Christmas paper* in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION may have catered for the intelligent student of literature?" The *it* in this sentence is a book (as stated on the dust cover and in the preface) for first year medical students, and the question would be pertinent (*a*) if the title of the book had been Principles of General Knowledge instead of Principles of Animal Biology, or (*b*) if the subject of the discussion had been actually called by the modest title which Y. Y. uses. Reference to the issue in which it was printed will disclose the fact that it was called a *General* Knowledge paper, and not, simply and unobtrusively, a Christmas paper.

Presumably therefore the *general* (as opposed to the Christmas) public of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is the intelligent student of literature, and the outcome of Y. Y.'s genial apologia is to admit how little the political policy of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is *en rapport* with its cultural appeal. As I read it, THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION endorses the view that the Labour Party or any other party with a progressive and socialist policy cannot hope to gain power without the support of the salaried middle classes. The bulk of them are certainly not "intelligent students of literature" or the social personnel from which Bloomsbury recruits its parlour bolsheviks. The incident which provided the occasion of this controversy is trifling. The issue which has emerged is what part the intellectuals of the Labour Party are playing or intend to play in consolidating representative sentiment in support of constructive Socialist policies. If my letter forces a few of them to face it, the irritation of those who share Mr. Brogan's disdainful sense of superiority for the class to which Fascist propaganda directs its appeal will not impair my digestion. LANCELOT HOGBEN

Aberdeen.

SIR,—Y. Y.'s distillation of fun from Professor Hogben's attack upon THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION'S General Knowledge paper has done much to make up for that paper having spoiled other Christmas dinners beside his and the Professor's. But it is to be hoped that this pardonable relief will not distract attention from the serious points of substance involved in the whole matter.

Professor Hogben is a distinguished man of science, and can, no doubt, do without the help of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION in educating himself about the bearing of modern scientific progress upon the plans and policies appropriate to realistic contemporary Socialism. But others (including many expensively educated persons like myself) are not so fortunate. For us the pages of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION are indeed from time to time enlivened by articles of a scientific nature. From these we may learn much that is fascinating about the quaint habits of birds and beasts and fishes. But for guidance in the task of keeping our socialism abreast of modern scientific discovery, in casting off the skin of nineteenth-century coal-and-gas ideology and substituting an up-to-date hydro-electric-biological mental wardrobe—for this we mostly look in vain. Yet if THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will not supply this urgent need, where else are we to look for help?

And as for "class-consciousness hostile to Socialism," I am afraid that the General Knowledge paper was not an isolated instance. Let me call your attention to a particularly glaring example from this week's issue in a review by Mr. Brian Howard of a novel by Miss Ruth Adam.

Mr. Howard tells us that this novel describes "a part of this country's life that not enough people know much about, namely the National School." Now there is no such thing, in the year 1938, as a National School. You may search in vain for any mention of such an institution in the Board of Education's reports. I have not read Miss Adam's novel, and I do not know whether she has herself used this term to describe what is, to judge from Mr. Howard's review, evidently a public elementary school. If she has, is it not odd that Mr. Howard did not call attention to the misnomer in his review? If she has not, is it not even odder that NEW STATESMAN AND NATION reviewers live in a world so exotic that they do not even know what the schools ordinarily attended by English boys and girls are called? What would be thought of a reviewer who described (otherwise than in conscious irony) a novel about Eton or Harrow as dealing with our "Charity Schools"?

And who are the "people" who "do not know much about" these schools? Since six out of every seven of Mr. Howard's compatriots have spent from six to nine years of their lives in such a school, it is difficult to resist that "people" means anything but the small minority of the snobbish, wealthy and ignorant, with whose outlook and values Professor Hogben has accused THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of being imbued.

On the face of it, these may seem to be trivialities. But there are few things that betray a class outlook so much as those two unconscious pointers—one's vocabulary and one's conception of fun. BARBARA WOOTTON

84 Napier Court,
Hurlingham Gardens, London, S.W.6.

SIR,—

Lancelot who was a knight is now turned calculator
And Arthur who was once a King lives on as a dictator,
Poor Guinevere still represents the body of the masses
Though beautiful, seduceable by many kinds of asses.
"But every ass," says Lancelot, "who'd win her by seduction
Must now employ a radiogram, a calculus or fluxion
And if she hides in fear of rape and says her name is Isabel
By means of rays of infra-red we'll quickly make her visible.
In love and war all means are fair, one must not be particular
And nowadays you'll win the dame by use of new curricula.
Words, music, art and history and such muck of plutocracy
Are technique of persuasion not the weapons of democracy
The spark gap and the cinema are mightier than the pen
It is by means of *Action* that you'll surely grasp the hen
And if it's you and not your foe possesses Guinevere
What matters if she be a corpse and look no longer fair?"

W. J. TURNER

SIR,—I have read the famous examination paper and have followed the comments on it, and everything has been to me, for three weeks, a wonderful diversion.

How I loved the paper! If I had had proper time to let my mind play about amongst mostly forgotten things I think I should have half remembered and half guessed about a third of A, B, C, D and E; but to do better I should have wanted help from some of the books that happen to be in the house. I am, however, quite sure of ten out of twelve in both F and G. I thought "Gordouli" slightly abstruse, for one either has to know the works of a modern poet, or to have been at a certain College at a certain time, and not many have had both good fortunes as I have had.

How surprised Professor Hogben will be when he finds how very modern some of the answers are! An "in wick" I suppose is what he calls "virtuosity"! If it had been "an out wick" I would agree, for I have never properly attained it.

Y.Y. is as usual an ungildable Lyly, but surely Mussolini would laugh just as heartily as he no doubt did about Miss Austen and Mrs. Ellison, if the question had concerned the month in this year in which he will mop up Gibraltar; for he knows that as a nation we shirk realities in politics even more than in literature.

And poor Mr. Hatfield! "The people," he says, "who have an opportunity of seeing current painting are numbered in thousands only. The cultural interest or significance of it is microscopic." Will he, being a Londoner, kindly find out the hours during which the National Portrait Gallery, the Royal Academy and the Tate Gallery remain open daily, and visit them, and look at all the modern work. Even the National Portrait Gallery, which may look the least modern, has asked me, who am still very young, to be photographed for it, so that, as I suppose, there should be something to make a portrait from, or at any rate to look at, if I happen to be worth it when I die in thirty years' time, which will bring me to the normal dying age of my family.

As to the cultural interest of current painting being microscopic, I shall have to ask him down to Devon soon, to see what the children in the Grammar and Senior Schools say about it. The reproductions have not come yet, but they soon will, and we will go to schools chosen by him haphazard, and the pictures will nearly all be "current," for the large black masses of most of the old pictures are useless for "cultural interest" in schools.

Killerton, Exeter. FRANCIS D. ACKLAND

SIR,—

Why do literary panjandrums
Like history in their conundrums?
Old-fashioned Christmas may be pleasant,
But the real point's the present.

You'd think, the way that culture acts,
It knew too much to care for facts,
Until you note, biology for a schoolboy
Is Ciceronian Greek to Y.Y. C. H. W.

JAPAN'S CO-OPERATION FOR PEACE

SIR,—In your issue of January 9th, Mr. Lionel Cowan desires us to contemplate Japan's co-operation in the effort in 1921 to secure the world's peace. He cites four things that Japan agreed to for this end: the evacuation of Siberia, the evacuation of Shantung, the acceptance of the 3-5-5 naval ratio, and the reduction of the army. It was a long time ago—so long that Mr. Cowan's memory on the subject is not quite accurate. The naval ratio was definitely agreed to, and though later on it was made a grievance and a humiliation, it actually gave Japan the hegemony of north-eastern Asia and saved her from bankruptcy. Concerning the evacuation of Siberia, this had been the subject of a Note from Washington on May 31st, 1921, couched in terms far sharper than those in which it is customary for one sovereign State to address another; the matter was not on the Conference agenda at all, but Mr. C. E. Hughes on January 24th, 1922, tackled the Japanese delegation while it was still in Washington, and told them that the United States expected Japan to clear out. She did so in the following November. As regards Shantung, there was no excuse whatever for the Japanese being there. They had demanded of Germany the surrender of Kiaochao "for retrocession to China," and subsequently overran the whole province, exported its currency, drenched it with morphia, controlled communications, and took possession of German properties. At Washington the Japanese refused to have the matter appear on the agenda, but insisted on direct negotiations with China with no third party speaking—a historic instance of a principle that has now become famous. (British and American observers were admitted, after a good deal of argument.) Numerous telegrams passed between Washington and Tokyo, and it took thirty-six sittings before Japan consented to leave Shantung. It was many weary months before she did get out, and she still continued to control the Tsingtao-Tsinan railway. As for the reduction of the army, that was not discussed at Washington at all. It came long afterwards, when General Ugaki was Minister for War. Ugaki has some statesmanlike qualities, and he recognised that Japan's wealth was not illimitable. So he struck a bargain with Mr. Hamaguchi that the army estimates should not be reduced, but that all the money saved by the abolition of four divisions should be spent on mechanisation. It was purely a matter of domestic economy, not of international co-operation. The consequence to Ugaki was that, when a year ago the Emperor commanded him to form a Cabinet, the loyal army would not let him carry out the Emperor's commands.

All this has nothing to do with the feasibility of "stopping Japan," but Mr. Cowan drags it in as proof of Japan's efforts to keep the peace. He takes it too much for granted that his readers have forgotten the facts. The Nine Power Treaty, next in importance of Washington's achievements after the naval ratios, Japan has violated whenever it suited her. A. MORGAN YOUNG

Oxford.

LET'S HAVE A NICE REVOLUTION

SIR,—Mr. Usherwood asserts:

(1) That members of the Labour Party who believe rearmament to be necessary are supporting a policy which they know to be thoroughly bad.

(2) That I desire a last, big, nasty revolution.

Why, I wonder, should someone as high-minded as Mr. Usherwood be so uncharitable, and so silly? He complains that I criticise men of good will; but at least I do not attribute either dishonesty or sadism to them, as he does to me. Is Mr. Usherwood so bigoted that he fails to realise that democrats can (1) honestly disagree with pacifism, and (2) honestly believe that the use of force is sometimes justifiable, without desiring a nasty revolution? In my own mild way I was merely putting forward the doctrine of the right of revolution which that respectable, law-abiding citizen, John Locke, once preached. Without this right, democracy becomes a sham, and political freedom is merely another name for accepting the *status quo*. We must, as democrats, believe in our principles sufficiently to challenge authority, if authority challenges our principles. Mr. Usherwood, I suppose, admits this. But when I go on to say I would be prepared in Spain to fight for the Government, Mr. Usherwood accuses me of dishonesty and of wanting a nasty revolution.

No one *wants* a nasty revolution, but you'll get one, unless some people have the courage to show that they will not sit down quietly while their rights are taken away. And in America, the working classes will never get Trade Union rights unless they are pretty tough in their methods of resistance to industrial dictatorship. The methods which you employ in politics cannot be decided in advance. In Spain it is, I believe, a moral duty to fight for democracy, in America to strike for it: in England most of us are lucky enough to avoid such unpleasant activities. Thank heavens, we can live in peace! But because we enjoy a security won by other people's fighting and striking, we have no right to preach the ethics of security to Spaniards or American Trade

Unionists, or to forbid them to use methods necessary in their situation, because they are unnecessary in ours at the moment.

Mr. Carritt asks about my distinction between ethics and politics. Following in the footsteps of Aristotle, I reply that the first is concerned with our duties towards other individuals, and the second with our duties as members and part controllers of the policies of groups, and of one group in particular, the State. This is not a hard-and-fast distinction, but it is a useful one because there is often a profound difference between the two. My criticism of "the philosophy of good intentions" is that it identifies them, whereas in fact the noble ideals of individual ethics can only be realised in the public morality of a society which is free from external or internal conflicts. The ideal of every democrat is a society of this type, but some of us believe that, since the modern world is not ideal, we may, as citizens with socialist ideals, have to do things which, in our private lives, we should certainly refuse to do. If, confusing ethics with politics, we persuade ourselves that these political duties are not duties because they sometimes conflict with our ideals of private morality, I believe that we are helping the forces of reaction, and weakening the forces of progress. In short, unless we believe in the right of revolution, we cannot obtain those constitutional reforms without which a "nasty" revolution is inevitable.

New College, Oxford. R. H. S. CROSSMAN

GIORGIONE

SIR,—Far be it from me to enter the already crowded controversy over the authenticity of the Giorgionesque panels in the National Gallery. In your issue, however, of January 9th, "Polycritic" devotes to the subject a paragraph of the "London Diary" which cannot, I feel, be allowed to pass uncommented. The gist of his argument, disentangled with some difficulty from its text, would appear to be that :—

(*a*) The doubts cast upon the panels are inspired largely by personal animosity for Sir K. Clark.

(*b*) The panels, even if not by Giorgione, possess for anyone who, like Sir K. Clark, is "interested in modern painting" an aesthetic value well justifying their purchase for £14,000.

The first argument seems to me merely frivolous. After all, a considerable sum of public money is involved, and one which is likely, I gather, to cripple the purchasing powers of the National Gallery for some time to come. In these circumstances, surely the taxpayer, faced with a disquieting mass of evidence against the panels (see only the Burlington Magazine for January) has a right to search for the truth, without his being assailed in a manner that smacks of an academy for young gentlewomen at its worst.

Secondly, if the panels are not by Giorgione, how can the price paid for them be justified? We all know that much of the £14,000 was paid for the "snob" value of Giorgione's name. If they are not by Giorgione and are instead by, let us say, Previtali, no amount of aesthetic titillation with which they may provide amateurs of modern painting will alter the brutal fact that the taxpayer has made a bad bargain.

In conclusion, I hardly feel that when the general misgivings are echoed in leading Continental newspapers (see for instance the *Figaro* for January 5th) one can seriously maintain the thesis that those misgivings are "due largely to the jealousy and animosity of one individual." SIMON HARCOURT-SMITH

21 Avenue des Nations,
Brussels.

[Polycritic writes: There are in the world not more than four paintings which are certainly by Giorgione. But there are a number of paintings Giorgionesque in style, which would command prodigious prices if they came into the market—the Budapest Portrait, for instance, or the two Uffizi pictures. And the reason that they would command prodigious prices is not, I suggest, "the snob value of Giorgione's name," but their rare loveliness. The same is true of the National Gallery panels, which I am not alone in believing to be aesthetically one of the most exciting acquisitions that the Gallery has ever made. The Trustees did not buy the panels as indubitable Giorgiones, and Sir Kenneth Clark has never done more than assert the likelihood of their being by the master. If these pictures were unquestionably by Giorgione, the price would certainly have been far higher. Thus it is less true of these pictures than of most acquisitions that the price was magnified by "snob value"—most National Gallery pictures are bought as the works of definite masters. I do not suggest that all the criticism of the panels results from personal animosity; but it is common knowledge in London, though not perhaps in Brussels, that the campaign against Sir Kenneth Clark is due in large measure to individual jealousy and is therefore frivolous. The fanciful *Figaro* article, I may add, to which Mr. Harcourt-Smith surprisingly attaches importance, was the work of an English journalist. —ED. *N.S. & N.*]

FASCISM IN FINLAND

SIR,—Mr. Hampden Jackson's most interesting article on "Fascism in Finland" omits one factor in the situation which makes for the encouragement of the movement. In the course of a brief business visit I paid to that enchanting country about two years ago, I met a young Fascist who told me about his group. They seemed to be living largely on encouragement from Italy (which included the gift of a huge bust of Mussolini), and they talked of Italy as an achieved Utopia, a golden Jerusalem, thoroughly built and in complete working order. "The only country in Europe," he said, "where life can be lived with self-respect."

I protested against this, and told him that though there were many things in England which could and must be improved, I thought it far more possible to live in England and keep one's respect than in Italy. I also mentioned that even on the material plane the standard of living was higher in England than in Italy. The young man said firmly that I must be a Communist to say such things. For he had met many English people of good standing, who had come to Finland as tourists, and they had often told him what a rotten place England had become, full of lazy people who would do no work and lived on the dole. They had told him again and again how much they longed for a Mussolini or a Hitler to appear in England, to save the whole thing from falling into ruin. A sweet thought, it seemed to me, old Mr. Blimp of Threadneedle Street and young Mr. Blimp the half-commission man (not the old Colonel, he's too decent) miscalling Jarrow on their holiday jaunt, and spreading the seeds of disorder among a gifted and decent people. M. B.

LIGHT RAILWAYS

SIR,—Mr. David Garnett does not often perpetrate errors of fact, but in his "Books in General" in your issue of January 1st he makes some grossly inaccurate and misleading statements regarding that important concern, the Kent and East Sussex Railway, which runs from Headcorn to Robertsbridge, and nowhere near Appledore. While it is true that one train comprises two Sheflex (not Ford, as he states) motor-buses coupled back-to-back, there are also orthodox trains. The locomotive stock of eight engines, four of which are in working order, contains the 62-year-old "Ringing Rock" of the North Pembroke and Fishguard Railway, and the "Gladstone" of Mr. Will Hay's recent film, "Oh! Mr. Porter," while until last year the first class coach in use was that saloon built in 1848 by the London and South Western Railway for no less a personage than Queen Victoria. Such a railway, Sir, deserves more reverence even from Mr. Garnett.

The Oakwood Press, R. W. KIDNER,
19 The Drive, Sidcup, Kent. Editor, *Light Railway Handbooks.*

Miscellany

SONG

As I walked out one evening,
Walking down Bristol Street,
The crowds upon the pavement
Were fields of harvest wheat.

And down by the brimming river,
I heard a lover sing,
Under an arch of the railway:
"Love has no ending.

I'll love you, dear, I'll love you
Till China and Africa meet,
And the river jumps over the mountain,
And the salmon sing in the street.

I'll love you till the ocean
Is folded and hung up to dry,
And the seven stars go squawking
Like geese about the sky.

The years shall run like rabbits,
For in my arms I hold
The flower of the ages,
And the first love of the world.

But all the clocks of the city
Began to whirr and chime:
O let not Time deceive you,
You cannot conquer Time.

In the burrows of the Nightmare
Where Justice naked is,
Time watches from the shadow
And coughs when you would kiss.

In headaches and in worry
Vaguely Life leaks away,
And Time will have his fancy
To-morrow or to-day.

Into many a green valley
Drifts the appalling snow;
Time breaks the threaded dances
And the diver's brilliant bow.

O plunge your hands in water,
Plunge them in up to the wrist;
Stare, stare in the basin,
And wonder what you've missed.

The glacier knocks in the cupboard,
The desert sighs in the bed,
And the crack in the tea-cup opens
A lane to the land of the dead.

Where the beggars raffle the bank-notes,
And the Giant is enchanting to Jack,
And the Lily-White Boy is a roarer,
And Jill goes down on her back.

O look, look in the mirror,
O look in your distress;
Life remains a blessing,
Although you cannot bless.

O stand, stand at the window
As the tears scald and start;
You shall love your crooked neighbour
With your crooked heart."

It was late, late in the evening,
The lovers, they were gone;
The clocks had ceased their chiming,
And the deep river ran on.

W. H. AUDEN

THE MOVIES

"Gribouille," at the Curzon.
"La Grande Illusion," at the Academy.
"La Belle Equipe," at the Berkeley.
"The Divorce of Lady X," at the Odeon.

IF anyone doubts that France now leads the world in the production of serious cinema, he should see the three French films listed above. It is, of course, only natural that, once her directors had acquired enough technique to compete with America, she should excel in this art, which demands so many of the same qualities as a good novel: quick sense of character, telling dialogue, the ability to make up your mind what it is you want to say and to stick to it (an ability even rarer in movies than in novels). Add to this the national flair for acting and the visual sense evidenced by the last hundred years of French painting, and you have a strong combination. An appetite for real life and a refusal to accept dull conventions of humour pervade even their fantasies: a Clair taxi-driver is the glorified abstract of every taxi-driver in France; a Clair street crowd, though it dance to his piping, is made up of people whom we all know. This contact with reality is doubly refreshing at a moment when English and American directors are increasingly occupied with conventional humour: the latter with his hero throwing a roll, accompanied by a wise-crack, at the heroine's face; the former with a stock farcical situation played for all it is worth. Consider that scene in *The Divorce of Lady X* which shows a stranded girl (Merle Oberon) demanding, and obtaining, a bed in the hotel suite of a young man (Laurence Olivier). Certainly the director cannot be accused of leaving stones unturned: every incident suggested by this predicament is exploited and squeezed to the last pip. Of its kind *Lady X* is a pleasant enough picture, lifted out of the nitwit class by the acting of Olivier and still more by that of Ralph Richardson. But cross the Channel, and mark the difference. Both *Lady X* and *Gribouille* show a maid undergoing legal cross-examination; one is a caricature, the other a small but quite distinct character.

Altogether *Gribouille* delights. It is the story of a bicycle shop proprietor (Raimu) enlisted as a juryman, who by the force of his personality secures the acquittal of a beautiful girl accused of murdering her lover. (We laugh at his self-esteem without for a moment doubting his intelligence.) Following a rash but honourable impulse, he gives shelter and employment to the acquitted girl, and the remainder of the film paints in sober, truthful tones the unrest which her beauty brings upon his provincial family. They are all real: the shop itself, its genial proprietor, his two children, his prospective son-in-law (a *professeur de gymnastique* in a small way round the corner), and his sensible wife. We are spared the obvious scenes of marital jealousy upon which most directors would have insisted; these two are quite sure of each other; "tu sais bien," says he, "que je ne t'ai pas trompée depuis la guerre." Michèle Morgan, who plays the girl, is something of a discovery; Raimu was never better; and the film reflects honour on its director, who is, according to one note on my desk, Marc Allegret, according to another, Roger le Bon. *Gribouille* is supported by a brief amateur film, *Tell Me If It Hurts*, made by a London medical officer, Dr. Richard Massingham, which underlines in a brilliantly entertaining fashion the horrors of a visit to the dentist. What painful emotions I recollected in the tranquillity of my Curzon fauteuil!

La Grande Illusion is the work of that very interesting director, Jean Renoir. The scene is a prisoners' camp during the war; French officers imprisoned in Germany the protagonists. But so impartial is the picture that it would make little difference if we were watching Germans imprisoned in France. Almost without exception the German warders are represented as kind and, indeed, extremely tolerant; and this fact makes it all the more appalling that the film should have been banned in Germany (and for that matter in Italy too—despite the award of a special prize at last year's Venice Festival). What is there to which the most ardent Fascist, the most devout Nazi could take exception? A Jew behaving well; a woman taking pity upon an enemy—no doubt these are dreadful sights for totalitarian eyes; but it is the underlying conviction, the more effective because not overtly expressed, that war is insane and inhuman, which has earned for *La Grande Illusion* the honour of this veto. The film has its faults, but they are small. A melodramatic air pervades the scene between the German and French military aristocrats (Erich von Stroheim and Pierre Fresnay) during which the latter's two comrades (Jean Gabin and Dalio) make their escape; and the subsequent adventures of this pair are not quite convincing. A peasant woman (Dita Parlo) shelters them, apparently for some months, in her roadside cottage. But such improbabilities as these seem small beside the passionate humanity that fills with its humour and tragedy the scenes of prison companionship.

The popular Jean Gabin also appears in Duvivier's *La Belle Equipe*, which tells with great charm of a group of five working-men who win 100,000 francs with a share in a lottery

ticket and invest it in a riverside café which they build themselves. Companionship is again the idea behind this film, and our own enjoyment depends upon our sympathy with their intelligent banter and infectious pleasure in the small things of life. There is a nice girl who helps them, and a nasty girl who hinders them; but the plot is little more than a variant of the Ten Little Nigger Boys motif. One by one they melt away, until—according to the programme—there are none; but in the version shown at the Berkeley some awkward last-minute change appears to have been made, perhaps in the belief that we cannot stand a sad ending. The new conclusion was so lame and unsatisfactory that by now the original one has probably been restored. In any event *La Belle Equipe* is well worth a visit. PETER GALWAY

CHILDREN'S PAINTINGS

THE paintings by schoolgirls from Langford Grove to be seen at the Zwemmer Gallery are delightful; but then so are most paintings by children who have not been reduced to imbecility by a term or two at what is ironically known as an "art school." These, however, are not only better than most that I have seen but different in kind from any, and the cause of this difference I should like to discover. It is tempting to put it down simply to superior talent. But that explanation will not do: for, though a few of these girls—Angela Penrose, Elizabeth Ellis, Susan Laurie, Eve Hinchliffe, and the slightly alarming Bridget Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, for instances—display peculiar gifts that would be noticeable anywhere, what strikes one most and needs accounting for are the vision and painter-like attack conspicuous in the work of almost all.

Everyone who cares seriously for visual art is acquainted with the work of those L.C.C. schoolchildren who, inspired by that great teacher Miss Richardson, produce abundantly, and seemingly without effort, things of unmistakable beauty. The secret of Miss Richardson's success appears to be that by removing inhibitions she enables the children to express their natural delight in shapes and colours. Their paintings, suggested as often as not by some theme proposed by the teacher, are generally charming in purposeful and well-disposed colour, and in taste perfect. But they are rarely pictorial. They have more in common with textiles and ceramics than with pictures. The artists revel in their sense of contrast and pattern; they invent joyfully and with ease; but they are not much interested, as artists, in their surroundings. Invention does duty for the seeing eye. And so, for motives they look into themselves rather than into external reality. An anthropologist might put it that they belonged to a culture less developed than that to which the Langford children belong; that they had not yet acquired the habit of seeing through and beyond the practical significance of things; that they were neolithic rather than archaic.

What one first notices about the paintings at the Zwemmer Gallery is that they are pictures. The interest of these children in the look of things is amazing. Consider No. 54, a description obviously of Mrs. Curtis, the head-mistress, seen from behind, as she sits at the piano and plays to her pupils. The vision is of an Impressionist acuity, and the rendering of the extremely complicated spatial relations of a funambulatory sureness. This was done by a girl of fifteen. Or take No. 125: here again the vision is beautifully clear and personal and the rendering admirable. Also, there is exquisite and, I think, conscious delicacy in the use of the medium. The picture is not only charming but thoroughly and deliberately painter-like.

If I venture an explanation of the difference between the works of the L.C.C. children and the pictures from Langford Grove, I venture humbly. Indeed, what I offer is no more than a suggestion. Langford Grove, besides being a school from which girls take scholarships and proceed to honourable degrees, is a small but ardent centre of civilisation. The students are gently encouraged to take art—all the arts—seriously, though not solemnly, to read and write poetry, to read and act plays, to make music—orchestral music even, to paint, to draw and to dance. Thus they come to think of art as a natural mode of self-expression and an essential part of normal life; which leads them to see the world not exclusively as a collection of hard and generally hostile facts, but as food for the imagination, an object of contemplation and emotion. For Council children it must be as difficult to practise this disinterested vision—seeing things as objects of contemplation rather than as calls to action—as to think of art as a normal and necessary part of existence. Art, despite the nonsense talked by politicians, is an escape always. But whereas the Council child inclines naturally to escape into him or herself, into a world of romance or introspection, the child at Langford Grove, thanks to education and environment, can escape sometimes into the world about her freed temporally of its distracting practical implications. This is the world of the pure painter, a world in which the look of things and not their utility matters. I suggest that these children have been shown the way to it, partly by their teacher, but also by Racine, Miss Austen, Mozart and Matisse. CLIVE BELL

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Die Meistersinger," at Sadler's Wells

It was an ambitious effort to put on Wagner's huge work at Sadler's Wells, for it demands tremendous resources, both vocal and instrumental, as well as calling for elaborate stage-management. The result is astonishingly good, and does infinite credit to everybody concerned. In fact, it may be said without any exaggeration that this production at Sadler's Wells is superior to many that have been given during recent years at Covent Garden. The chief limitation is in the orchestra, which is too small for this work. It must not be thought, however, that this deficiency is obvious. On the contrary, the orchestra is excellent in material and under Mr. Warwick Braithwaite plays so well that all Wagner's essential effects are achieved and the climaxes are all relatively impressive. The general effect is, however, much greater than many productions achieve with much larger means, because of the enthusiasm and vitality which infuses the performance. Mr. Tudor Davies, for example, is not only vocally more pleasing than many German heroic tenors but he gives Walther von Stolzing a delightful vigour which makes the whole action of the plot much more convincing than usual. Again, the Hans Sachs of Mr. Arthur Fear is a really fine and dignified achievement, while the Beckmesser of Mr. Sumner Austin is one of the most engaging and droll of performances, but making the character more sympathetic than Wagner intended. The chorus sang well, and Mr. Braithwaite built up the second act by steady judgment into a magnificent climax. Altogether this is a production to make all Wagnerians rejoice.

"Room Service," at the Strand

Room Service is a spirited American farce, acted by an American company. It has been running about three weeks at the Strand Theatre. Speed (which is not inconsistent with a languid and leisurely drawl) is the quality in which American acting usually excels: speed and "go"; and these are essential qualities for playing farce. Probably the actors at the Strand slowed down their performance a little for the benefit of an English audience. They "punched" their amusing lines rather more—and very properly—than they would have done in New York. Nevertheless, the fun is fast and furious, and for those who do not tire of laughing at absurdities for a couple of hours and more, *Room Service* is good entertainment. The situation of a theatrical manager and his company being cut off supplies at an hotel (marooned in his rooms) and the subterfuges he is forced to while waiting for a backer to enable him to pay his bill, are amusing and varied. Comic invention at any rate has never failed the dramatists, nor have their interpreters failed them. The whole cast is excellent, though the two feminine parts are colourless and dull. The dry, cool-as-a-cucumber performance of Mr. William Swetland could not have been bettered; and the agitations of others were perpetually kept up to concert pitch. Temperamental excitability and exaggerated calm are the two main elements in all American farce, and *Room Service* is ingeniously constructed to make the most of them. It has one rare quality—it gets funnier towards the end.

Live Pictures at the Lefevre

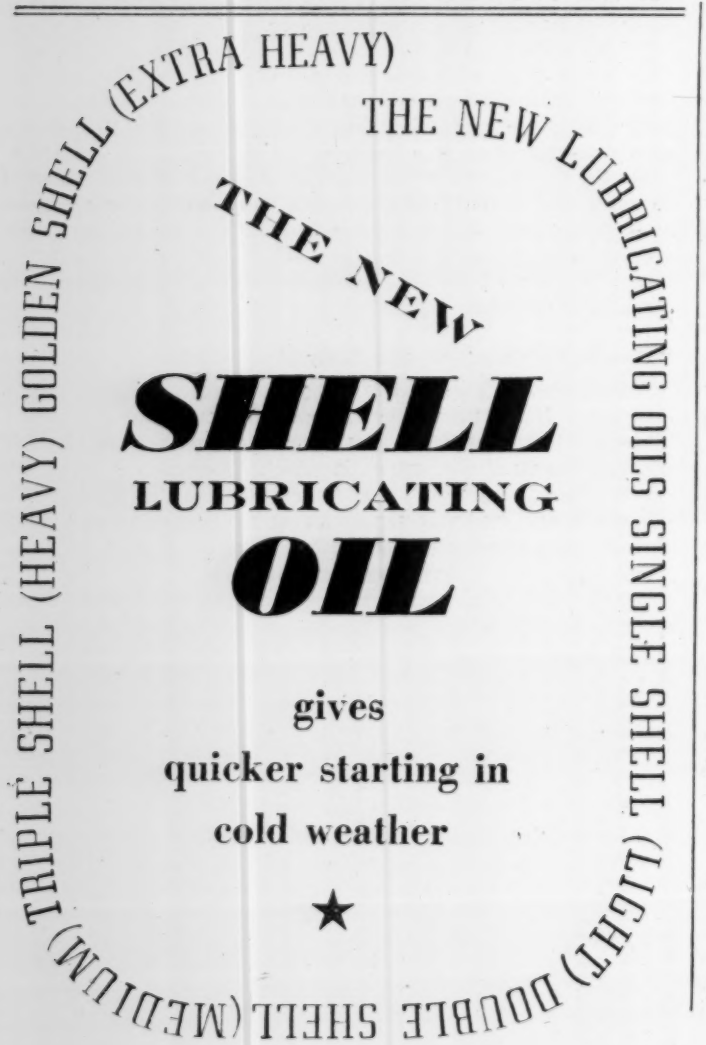
In spite of all efforts to silence them, pictures still tell stories. To-day, the anecdote discredited, they tend to talk about their authors. This artist's cobalt violet and that one's black lines are there to tell you about their egos. Are you interested? Would you listen to a man who buttonholed you in St. James's Street daily, to tell you about himself? Generally not. A few of the dozen painters whose pictures are exhibited in this show have something to explain about what they have seen. Mr. Adrian Stokes' pictures show a sensitive and subtle perception, which is at the moment handicapped by a technique still immature. Mr. Clive Branson's landscapes are full of interest but fail in being somewhat heavy-handed. Mr. Edward le Bas, whose paintings are somewhat in the manner of Pissarro and Sisley (1872 style) is almost too suave and accomplished. As for the rest of the exhibition, it is an old story. Mr. Edward Wolfe has brilliant colours and juicy paint, Mr. Ivon Hitchins a soft umbrageous charm. Miss Sine Mackinnon's work is acid, spikey and dark; Miss Frances Hodgkins' is dark, nostalgic, almost aromatic. Mr. Julian Trevelyan's *Cottages* are pretty objects. Miss Winifred Nicholson exploits an innocent eye, and Miss Katherine Church a vigorous and well-charged brush. The show is excellently arranged—in groups; its title is its misfortune. Liveliness in painting has gone on for so long now that it has begun to bite its own tail in its efforts to produce a reaction. Painters, having discovered the raw and throbbing vitality of children's art, have boosted it so that to-day the little wretches can sell their works for 10 guineas apiece. Grown-ups would be well advised to leave this field of liveliness to the children who do it so well, and to re-establish painting as a regular profession, scientific as well as poetic. It is hard to produce a better art than the age demands, and this age seems to be satisfied with almost anything. But if a reasonable standard of professional proficiency were successful in shaking off the amateurs, naives and bores, the effort would have been worth while.

Exhibition of Chinese Art

The exhibition at 9 Conduit Street in aid of funds for medical supplies to Chinese soldiers can be confidently recommended to anyone interested in Chinese Art. It has one great advantage: it is comparatively small, it is clearly arranged, and well spaced. Groups of objects of a homogeneous type, such as celadon, Tz'u-chou ware, bronzes or blue and white are shown in separate cases, and the result is to make the exhibition easily comprehensible. There has been no attempt to cover the whole ground of Chinese Art, but simply a very successful effort to show a *coup d'oeil* of what Chinese artists in various materials could produce. The specimens are all of a very high standard, and one can browse very pleasantly for an hour or so among old friends and new. High-spots of the show are Mr. Eumorfopoulos' well-known blue horse (No. 156) of the T'ang dynasty, perpetually looking for a lump of sugar, a superb Tz'u-chou vase with scrolling peonies in black on a cream-coloured ground (No. 181), Mrs. Walter Sedgwick's T'ang silver bowl in the form of a flower inlaid with birds and animals in gold (No. 363) and Miss Hambleton's Shang-Yin marble tiger (No. 201). One Japanese has crept in and must surely find himself exceedingly inapropos; but this is an excellent show on the whole, reflecting the greatest credit on those who have organised it in such a short time. It is open until January 28th. We all know what it is like to have toothache and not to be able to get a remedy; how indescribably worse it must be to be in the same condition with one's body torn by bullet and shrapnel.

Decorative Paintings by Michael Stewart at the Calmann Gallery, St. James's Place.

Decorative painting has no deep roots in England. We always remember Thornhill of course, but when the art has been practised at all in these islands it has generally been by Italians. In fact, when Thornhill was commissioned to decorate the dome of St. Paul's, the two leading Italian painters left the town by way of protest. Apart from Pre-Raphaelite efforts, the art was almost forgotten when Mr. Duncan Grant revived it with a splendid display of baroque talent. Mr. Michael Stewart is frankly a follower in the Grant tradition. He has, of course, his own qualities—a sense of style and occasional, surprisingly lovely, discoveries in colour—but for the most part his range is determined by the tradition. This pleasant show contains also a set of landscapes in pen and wash, less decorative, less mannered, and to tell the truth, less successful.



THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, January 15th—

A Basque Children's Concert, Rudolf Steiner Hall, 3. Tickets from 53 Marsham Street (VIC 2168) and at Hall.

Exhibition of Chinese Art, 9 Conduit Street. Talk at 6 p.m. by Peter Floud. Exhibition open until January 28th.

Domestic Services Exhibition and Conference, Royal Horticultural Hall. Till January 21st.

SUNDAY, January 16th—

Prof. F. Aveling on "Socialism, Progress and Temperament," Conway Hall, 11.

Film Society Performance, New Gallery Kinema, 2.30.

Lili Baron on "Applying the Dialectic To-day," 86 Rochester Row, 8.

John Betjeman on "Antiquarian Prejudice," Group Theatre, 9 Gt. Newport Street, 8.30.

MONDAY, January 17th—

"Little Plays of St. Francis," Dramatic Society, University College Theatre, 8.15. Till January 22nd. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday, 2.30.

TUESDAY, January 18th—

J. Cuthbert Wigham on "Spain: Latest Conditions," Friends House, 1.20.

G. F. McCleary on "Population Problems in the British Commonwealth," Royal Society, 5.15.

A Public Meeting to Protest Against the Crime of War. Speakers include Dr. Maude Royden, Mrs. Gerr, Miss Wellington Koo and others. Friends House, 8.

Major-Gen. A. C. Temperley on "Danger Spots in Europe," Morley College, 8.

R. F. Harrod on "The Coming Slump," Manson Hall, 8.15.

WEDNESDAY, January 19th—

Hampstead Left Book Club. Public Meeting on "Present Situation in Spain," Hampstead Town Hall, 7.45.

Hubert Griffith on "The Social Significance of the Drama in Britain and Russia," Conway Hall, 8.

THURSDAY, January 20th—

Exhibition of Chinese Art, 9 Conduit Street. Talk at 6 p.m. by Arnold Silcock.

Meeting of Royal Society of Tropical Medicine, Manson Hall, 8.15.

FRIDAY, January 21st—

Rev. E. R. Hughes on "The Far East," Essex Hall, 8.30. First of six lectures. Tickets from New Fabian Research Bureau.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Out of Africa, by Karen Blixen (Putnam, 12*s.* 6*d.*), is the first book to make me understand wanting to settle in the heart of Africa, and to have given me a picture of white people living a free and generous life there. For though Kenya is healthy, one always gets the impression that the colonists have gone there to make money, or because they are not able to lead the kind of life they want at home. Usually they have many complaints to make about Africa and the natives and the overwhelming difficulties of their lives. Baroness Blixen gives a completely different picture. Before the war, she knew Africa well and had done a good deal of big game hunting, and lived with her husband on a farm at the foot of the Ngong Hills, twelve miles from Nairobi. After the campaign against Von Lettöw Vorbeck was over, she carried on the farm herself, and must have made it the most delightful place in the whole continent. Ruin came in the end: the price of coffee slumped disastrously, and the locusts swarmed out the sky, breaking the branches off the trees with their weight; the farm is sold and her dearest friends are dead, but she has been able to see her life in perspective, and in this most delightful book one sees the world she created, and falls under the spell of a brave and enchanting personality—thus a record of failure and of tragedy stirs not pity in the reader, but profound envy.

* * *

Her farm was a little too high to grow coffee successfully. In a good year, with fifty-five inches of rain, they got ninety tons, but there were many bad years, when frost touched the berries and spoiled the crop. The care-free years were those when the plantation was made but had not yet come into bearing. All round her farm were Kikuyu squatters settled on her land, who held a few acres and did a few days' work for her in the year in return. Across the river was the reserve of the celebrated Masai, who live on a diet of milk and blood, and who sometimes came over to complain about a lion that was taking their cows and to ask her to shoot it for them. From her first weeks in Africa, Baroness Blixen had felt a strong affection for the natives; she felt about them "as someone with an ear for music who had happened to hear music for the first time when he was already grown up." The natives repaid her affection with complete trust. "They would speak a great deal more openly than one European speaks to another. They were never reliable, but in a grand manner sincere." The free, generous life of the farm was made possible by this affection on one side and by the trust and sincerity on the other. Baroness Blixen would doctor the sick natives in the morning and got into the habit of spending the evening with the women of her Somali head-man's household: his wife, mother-in-law and sisters-in-law, whose attitude to life is described in one of the best chapters in the book. "The greatest social functions of the farm were the *Ngomas*—the big native dances. At these occasions we entertained up to fifteen hundred or two thousand guests." The lawn was very popular as a dancing floor, and these functions left it marked with many brown rings, as though the grass had been burned away by fire. Some of the dances are regarded by white people as immoral, though they are highly approved by the Kikuyu grandmothers looking on. On one occasion, Baroness Blixen returned from a holiday to find that her European manager's wife had had twenty-five of her best workmen put into prison in the height of the coffee-picking season for dancing a forbidden dance four or five miles away from the farm! She soon had them out. Somehow she manages to give very vivid pictures of the Kikuyu character in few words:

> I used to let my houseboys deal out snuff to the old women on Sunday mornings, while I myself was still in bed. On this account I had a queer lot of customers round my house on Sundays, like a very old, rumpled, bald and bony poultry yard; and their low cackling made its way through the open windows of my bedroom. On one particular Sunday morning the gentle lively flow of Kikuyu communications suddenly rose to ripples and cascades of mirth; some highly humorous incident was taking place out there . . . the matter was that Farah had forgotten to buy snuff, so that to-day the old women had come a long way for nothing. . . . When I met one of them she would stand still in front of me, poke a crooked bony finger at me, and with her old dark face dissolving into laughter, remind me of the Sunday when she and her sisters in the snuff had walked and walked up to my house, only to find I had forgotten to get it, and that there was not a grain there—Ha ha, Msabu!

* * *

One has, in the absence of photographs, to visualise the background for oneself: a spacious house with fine pieces of Danish furniture, and the skins of lions and leopards, and in the hall a great cuckoo clock, to which all the children on the farm made a pilgrimage at midday, driving their flocks of goats before them.

> They left their flocks on the lawn and came in noiselessly on their bare feet. The bigger ones were about ten years and the youngest two years. They behaved very well, and kept a sort of self-made ceremonial for their visits which came to this: that they could move about freely in the house, so long as they did not touch anything, nor sit down, nor speak unless spoken to. As the cuckoo rushed out on them, a great movement of ecstasy and suppressed laughter ran through the group.

The best full-length portrait is that of Kamante, a native boy whose life the Baroness saved, and who rewarded what he regarded as her eccentric action by adopting the Christian religion and putting his life at her disposal. He turned out to be a most wonderful cook, with the gift for making things light. He would whip eggs with an old weeding knife, and they towered like clouds under his black fingers. Yet he remained a Kikuyu in his tastes, occasionally bringing her a lump of mutton-fat as a dog will bring a bone into the house as a present for his master. The greatest epicure in Nairobi, old Mr. Bulpett, pronounced him one of the best chefs he had known, but Kamante appeared indifferent to praise, until some time after a visit from the Prince of Wales, he asked: "Did the son of the Sultan like the sauce of the pig? Did he eat it all?"

* * *

But if the natives were the foundations on which the farm existed they are by no means all of the book. "Visitors from Europe drifted into the farm like wrecked timber into still waters." Such was Baroness Blixen's compatriot, old Knudsen, who never wearied of recounting the Saga of his triumphs, so that he seemed to be talking about an unknown character. Then there was the penniless Swedish tragic actor, who suggested playing the last act of *Ghosts* with the Baroness, the evening before he set off to walk to Tanganyika, through a country infested by lions. This wrecked actor, wandering in Africa, and naming the vintage of a chambertin, is a figure out of Conrad, and his success with the Masai would have delighted Conrad's imagination. The best lion story is that when two lions came and killed her oxen; the Baroness and Denys Finch-Hatton waited till dark and then walked up to within twenty-five yards of the kill, to be stopped by growling. The Baroness switched an electric torch on, over Finch-Hatton's shoulder, while he shot first one lion and then another. "The torch-work on the second lion was a little shaky," he said afterwards. At the sound of the shots the children poured out of school and rushed up, dancing round and chanting a triumphal song with the chorus of A.B.C.D.

> We went back to the house and Juma brought and opened our bottle. We were too wet and too dirty with mud and blood to sit down to it, but stood up before a flaming fire in the dining room, and drank our live singing wine up quickly. We did not speak one word. In our hunt we had been a unity and we had nothing to say to one another.

She flew with Finch-Hatton and describes flying well, and her portrait of him, though brief, bears out all that other friends have said of a figure who had the nobility of an earlier breed of man. *Out of Africa* is a most charming, sensitive and beautiful book.

DAVID GARNETT

THE AGE OF ANTHOLOGY

Alan Parsons' Book. Edited by His Wife. *Heinemann.* 10s. 6d.

"Once I could meet with them on every side," anthologies of Sleep, of Gardens, of Roses, of the Englishman in Greece, of the Seventeenth Century, of love poems, bad poems, hate poems. They represented to the 'teens and the early twenties what intelligence tests, horoscopes, and crossword puzzles represent now. Hearing that a new anthology was out, one would rush round to see what was "in"—"Hey Nonny No," of course, and lots of Donne, Blake, and Marvell, and Tennyson was creeping back, and the usual ending with "Brumana" or "Babylon" or little Ariadne. The anthology was perhaps the most creative thing about that very uncreative age. Of late there have been very few anthologies, and such as they are, they are different in conception. In the old days anybody could make one. It was only necessary to have a bad promiscuous ear and a pair of scissors, and the strength and patience to sort out and cut up various other anthologies—there were those, like Bullen's and Norman Ault's, that had really made public extremely inaccessible material, and which pseudo-anthologisers could draw on indefinitely, so that most people who got their poetry from them never had recourse to the original sources at all. I recognised, for instance, a master hand in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION Particular Knowledge Test, for although I knew most of the quotations, I realised, to my horror, that while I could identify the lines of Clough, Thackeray, Malherbe, Hérédia, Hugo, Mallarmé, etc., I couldn't remember any other quotation out of the poems they came from. I had been bred to quotations like a truffle-hound to its rich quarry—anything on either side of them was so much loose earth. And most Georgian poets were brought up that way, too. If I did all my reading in anthologies they did all their writing for them. Sixteen lines was the right length for a poem, if you wanted to get the whole thing in—and once in one of them, it was soon to be in all. The only difficulty was ever to get it out again, and make room for something newer. Robert Graves and Laura Riding lamented this in their amusing *Pamphlet against Anthologies*, and when eventually the Georgian poets' lack of inspiration dawned on them, and the anthology decayed, and Miss So-and-So's *Dreams to Sell* languished in its crushed morocco, there was room only for the really specialised collection—such as Arthur Waley's *Chinese Poems*, or Pearsall Smith's *English Aphorisms*. The day of the amateur anthologist was over. But not of the Anthology. In 1932 Aldous Huxley published *Texts and Pretexts*, in which the personal taste of a great reader and most prolific writer was exposed. It contained a deal of unusual and excellent material, and by means of a somewhat harrowing commentary gave a real picture of the author's mind, which is in itself an epitome of post-Georgian culture. Five years later Maurice Baring produced an anthology, *Have You Anything to Declare*, containing many exquisite things and a commentary no less exquisite. It is clear, in fact, that there will always be a place for the well-stocked, well-annotated commonplace book of the exceptional poet or critic—so long as there is not a flood of *Dreams to Sell* to swamp them.

Alan Parsons' Book is rather a different case. Here is someone whose whole life is in his commonplace book; it became a kind of family Bible. In my small, fastidious, hugely overripe and over-civilised Oxford set it was customary to keep anthologies; there were nine people who kept them for every one who kept a diary—if we had known nine people. These were left lying about and one would pick them up and see:

> Si qua desiderio veteres renovamus amores

"O God, that means he's going back to so-and-so again," or

> Call Tullia's ape a marmosyte and Leda's goose a swan

"I wish he wouldn't dine in All Souls." One could read these pressed flowers like an engagement book, and after *The Waste Land* appeared we were able to write whole poems in which not one line was original. This is what Alan Parsons has done through the whole of his short life. We read of his engagement and marriage to Viola Tree, his worship of Lady Diana Cooper, his impressions of paternity, his dislike of the Civil Service, his horror of the war and at the death of his friends, and his impatience with marriage, poverty, and many other things all seen through the quotations which he wrote down at the time.

> How many decrepit, hoary, harsh, writhen, bursten-bellied, crooked, toothless, bald, blear-eyed, impotent, rotten old men shall you see flickering still in every place?

How this ejaculation from the *Anatomy of Melancholy* sums up an attitude of the end of the war, the slow demobilisation, the returning few encountering, safely entrenched on the home front, the prosperous many. This is not the book of a happy man. One sees a reserved, scholarly, passionate youth conscious of his own possibilities, fretting at the contrast between life as it might be, and as it is. His love for his wife removes that contrast, but the war and his humdrum job bring it back again. Eventually, to make money, he becomes a dramatic critic; the entries in his anthology almost cease, and if he were really a scholar, then to write such notices as he did for the *Daily Mail*, judging from the two included, must have been the last refinement of self-torture. He died of pneumonia in his early forties. Some interesting ghosts haunt the anthology. One first comes upon them in Mr. Michael Burn's Introduction:

> But as one who gave and took exceptional pleasure he deserves to be remembered; and if not as that, as an erudite, courtly, and youthful intellect, and if not as that, as one of the lights in that firmament where the Grenfells glittered and as the flower of a golden age and company; but most of all because he devoted himself individually to treasuring that Arcadian culture which but for such custodians might in these harsh times vanish.

I think that Arcadian culture deserves better custodians than those who abandon it for the *Daily Mail*, but it is the golden company that is even less reassuring. The Grenfells, Shaw-Stewart, Charles Lister "the most dazzling of the lost generation, who would now, had they lived, be at the head of the country," one wonders really, if they had lived, what their achievement would have been. They wrote good letters, and poems in the taste of the time, they were all-round sportsmen, but so much of it seems only upper-class high spirits, and that youthful interest in literature which is so easily left behind at the office or the altar. After all, Duff Cooper survived, Father Ronald Knox survived, Herbert Asquith survived; they impress, but do not dazzle. If you compare Julian Grenfell with John Cornford, for instance, without assuming one to be a better writer than the other, simply as two young people who both died for something, there seems a very great difference. One wrote:

> Life is Colour and warmth and Light
> And striving evermore for these
> And he is dead who will not fight
> And who dies fighting has increase.
>
> And when the burning moment breaks
> And all things else are out of mind
> And only Joy of Battle takes
> Him by the throat and makes him blind.
>
> Through joy and blindness he shall know,
> Not caring much to know, that still
> Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
> That it be not the Destined Will.

and he wrote, "*I adore* war. It is like a big picnic without the objectlessness of a picnic. . . . It is all the best fun. I have never never felt so well, or so happy, or enjoyed anything so much. It just suits my stolid health, and stolid nerves, and barbaric disposition." If you compare with that

> For all but suicides and slaves
> This death is background to our lives
> This is the risk our freedom has to take.
> Some may die bold as Schulze died,
> Many will live to avenge our dead
> But this fear haunts us all. Flesh still is weak.

or

> Nothing is ever certain, nothing is ever safe,
> To-day is overturning yesterday's settled good.
> Everything dying keeps a hungry grip on life,
> Nothing is ever born without screaming and blood.
> Understand the weapon, understand the wound—

You will see that the difference really is one of understanding. One was born out of his time, a Homeric hero, the other, a brave, thoughtful, frightened young man, born into it.

There is one of those dead who had obviously great promise. It is a pity that other poems of Raymond Asquith (the two here are also quoted in Lady Oxford's Autobiography) are not available. Anyone who could write

> When Mona Lisa posed with rustic guile
> The slow enigma of her simple smile,
> Her leisured lovers raised a pious cheer,
> While the slow mischief spread from ear to ear.

could have been a poet. Otherwise there is much little known and fascinating Elizabethan material in *Alan Parsons' Book*, and admirable quotations from Johnson and Pepys, and the fragment of an anthology on London. Alan Parsons was no writer himself, but he has introduced me to a new authoress, a delicious, honest, frank, ironical commentator on her life and time, and the mistakes she has made in it, Miss Viola Tree.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

BIBLE AND APOCRYPHA

The History of the Civil War in the USSR. Volume I. Edited by JOSEPH STALIN, MAXIM GORKY, S. KIROV, K. VOROSHILOV, and others. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 2s. 6d.

Red Eagle. By DENNIS WHEATLEY. *Hutchinson.* 12s. 6d.

This history, the prelude, apparently, to a considerable series, is the first detailed, comprehensive and thoroughly official account of the troubled and complex events that began with Lenin's mixed reception at the Finland Station, and ended with the storming of the Winter Palace and the overthrow of the Provisional Government. Written with the documented and convincing scholarship characteristic of Communist controversy, this history seems a good deal more reliable than its predecessors, and although there is a tendency to make Stalin the invariable Aaron to the miracles of Lenin's Moses, most of the bias is displayed in selection and omission rather than in direct distortion. Lenin's unfortunate habit of slanging his subordinates is used to beat Piatakov, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, and the rest of the latter-day traitors, whereas Kalinin's deviations, for instance, the Menshevik attitude of Gorki, and Stalin's own defence of those loathsome twins, Kamenev and Zinoviev, are tactfully omitted. The tone of the text is foretold on the cover, where Stalin's name is printed several times larger than those of his co-editors. But the vast scope of the history dwarfs the individuals, and personalities lie small beneath the tremendous tilt from one epoch to another.

The Russian Revolution is generally regarded as a single progress, as a steady movement that began with Prince Lvov, slid left to Kerenski, and finally toppled (or was pushed) over into Communism. A common analogy is that of a boulder rolling ever faster downhill. Actually, the process seems to have been different; there was not a first and a second revolution, but two semi-independent revolutions happening simultaneously, with different bases and different purposes. Lenin remarked on the peculiar dual power in the summer of 1917; the Provisional Government, representing revolutionary Capitalism, functioning side by side with the Soviet of Workers and Soldiers, with which it was totally incompatible. Both movements sprang from the fall of Czardom; Russia was telescoping her historical evolution. The wretched Mensheviks were Marxistically correct in supporting the Provisional Government on the grounds that organised Capitalism must precede Socialism, but they found their attitude difficult to explain to hungry workers and mutinous sailors. The Bolsheviks, despite their subsequent denials, shelved Marx for the main chance, and proved the superiority of practice to theory.

The present volume suffers from the limitations of all official histories, and lacks the epigrammatic vigour of a Trotsky, or the brilliant reportage of a Reed. But it does succeed in giving a bird's-eye newsreel of enormous events over a whole empire, without sacrificing either theoretical argument, or direct quotation of contemporary material—such as this 1916 soldiers' song:

Three deeds I'll do:
The first black deed,
The captain off I'll lead.
The second black deed,
Put my rifle to his head.
The third black deed,
Right there I'll shoot him dead.
Cursed son of a bitch,
My Captain!

As far as impartiality is possible in the fight between light and darkness, this is a history and not a propagandist manifesto; private jealousy was not yet public policy, and truth was preserved by unlimited freedom of slander.

Red Eagle is a luscious bourgeois sweet to swallow after the Party pill. Taking the exploits of Voroshilov as a background, and terrible slaughter as his motif, Mr. Wheatley rages romantically through the Civil War, and paints the Proletariat purple. To him nothing is ever moderate or dull; battles are always fearful and bloody, the scribbler Trotsky bathes up to his neck in blood, Tukachevsky signs more death warrants than he lights cigarettes, and Stalin and Voroshilov grasp their automatics with set jaws, whilst slimy Rykov rages and Lenin's iron will prevails. Parts of the book are just untrue, much is seriously distorted, and all is popularised nearly to fiction.

Mr. Wheatley is discreet about his sources, and the dust-cover hints mysteriously that "*there are channels* through which the truth can be obtained, and these have been tapped for *Red Eagle*." There are also channels of sober and accurate information, and it is to be regretted that these were not tapped more frequently.

JOHN MAIR

A PANEGYRIC OF POPE

On the Poetry of Pope. By GEOFFREY TILLOTSON. *Oxford University Press.* 7s. 6d.

Johnson wrote the best panegyric of Pope there has been or is likely to be. Midway, with the perfect timing which marks the whole essay, he pauses to look up at Dryden. The briefest pause, the least elevation of the eye—but who, to-day, can read Pope without prolonging that glance?

Line for line Pope is the better poet. It is to escape the decree of his line—the model line with a tight movable waist—that we think of Dryden and less imprisoning fashion. Dryden, Cowley, Waller, Ben Jonson, Donne—the eye travels back over couplets, longing a little for each in turn, till at last it rests on Chaucer. From Pope's Wife of Bath,

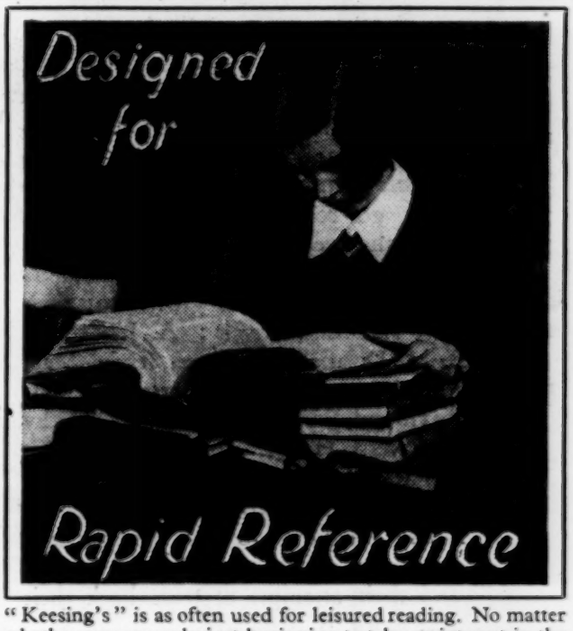
Behold the woes of matrimonial life,
And hear with rev'rence an experienced wife,

to the Wife herself:

Experience, though noon auctoritee
Were in this world, were right ynough to me
To speak of wo that is in mariage.

How clumsily the older poet begins ("were . . . were," "to . . . to"), how vigorously and deliciously, and—*the couplet runs on.* That, after all, is what we have been looking for. Pope gives me many pleasures, and seldom greater pleasure than in *The Rape of the Lock*, where restriction is delightful. The injunction to the Sylphs who take charge of Belinda's petticoat—

Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins,
Be stopp'd in vials, or transfix'd with pins;
Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,
Or wedg'd whole ages in a bodkin's eye;
Gums and Pomatums shall his flight restrain,
While clogg'd he beats his silken wings in vain;
Or Alum styptics with contracting pow'r
Shrink his thin essence like a rivel'd flow'r:
Or, as Ixion fixed, the wretch shall feel
The giddy motion of the whirling Mill,
In fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the sea that froths below!



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The poem contains exquisite and thrilling passages of a kind unmatched in English. Yet even here, unconsciously, one resists the style: I speak only for myself, but at line 97 of canto II—one of the rare examples of the couplet running on in Pope—I experience a thrill which has nothing to do with the quality of the verse. A gate opens, and I get a whiff of countless poets I have liked better. Pope's art is to lock his reader into a garden where everything is in place and from which we shall never want to emerge. But, despite walls—and every line adds an inch to the wall—he can never hold us for long.

One characteristic of Pope—the depth given to his poetry by his interest in classical writers—made him supreme in his own time and has divided readers ever since. The classics are more substantially part of his work than they are, say, with Milton. It is not only a question of mythology; one must have read and remembered the originals in order to get the flavour he draws from an old situation or phrase. And having read Homer, how far shall we enjoy Pope's version of him? How does the Dunciad compare with Juvenal, or *January and May* with Chaucer's talé? These pieces, it seems to me, have become less valuable since they ceased to express contemporary taste. Only with Horace, though Pope is still inferior to his original, does he quite satisfactorily identify himself. The moral essays, epistles and satires release more poetry than the rest of his work put together. There the rigidity of metre is matched by conversational ease; the well-known passages—"Atticus" and the end of Buckingham—are admired less for enamel and more for a real movement of the mind. Indeed, though well known, "In the worst inn's worst room" comes to us now as though from some other poet—a superlative Crabbe, shall we say. Yet it *is* Pope's voice; and in these poems of his middle-age there are many lesser passages which a modern reader will prefer to his early brilliance. I have always liked (in one of the imitations of Horace) his picture of retirement to "five acres of rented land."

> Content with little I can piddle here
> On brocoli and mutton, round the year;
> But ancient friends (tho' poor or out of play)
> That touch my bell, I cannot turn away.
> 'Tis true, no Turbots dignify my boards,
> But gudgeons, flounders, what my Thames affords:
> To Hounslow-heath I point and Bansted-down,
> Thence comes your mutton, and these chicks my own:
> From yon old walnut-tree a show'r shall fall;
> And grapes, long ling'ring on my only wall,
> And figs from standard and espalier join;
> The dev'l is in you if you cannot dine:
> Then cheerful healths (your Mistress shall have place),
> And, what's more rare, a Poet shall say Grace.

The common words there—"piddle," "mutton," "chicks"—fall into as good a catalogue as the sylphs of *The Rape of the Lock*; and in face of it, one may be surprised that Pope took such pains elsewhere, to change a "fly" into "a vengeful hornet," to banish from Windsor Forest all fish except "the scaly breed."

I wonder what Mr. Tillotson, whose book is an ingenious expansion of Pope's ideas on "correctness," would make of this passage? That he would like it, I feel sure; for he likes everything about Pope, to the point of echoing Byron's "the most faultless of poets, and almost of men." It is years since anyone wrote so closely and so appreciatively of Pope. The curious thing about Mr. Tillotson is that he is capable of expounding Popian doctrine with minute and fascinating detail and on the next page of making some wildly fantastic claim for his subject. "A profound kinship with Mozart and Keats" appears at the end of the book; elsewhere I notice that he compares Pope as a love-poet with Donne, to the latter's disadvantage; "Virgilian" is the epithet which creeps into his loftier paragraphs. What bosh! Yet he has written an interesting book, and probably a better one than if he had been cautious. Within the framework of Pope's "correctness" he shows admirably the feeling for poetry (denied him by so many critics), for nature, for friendship, for the age in which he lived. He quotes such lines as:

> No rat is rhymed to death, or maid to love

to emphasise a more demonic element in Pope's verse. But the comparisons with Keats, Mozart, Wordsworth, though only thrown out as hints, spring from a fatal error: whatever Pope may have been he was not a *forward-looking* poet. He had no inner vision which future centuries could discover; his versification marked the climax, not the beginning, of a series of experiments; he was in fact—tethered to the classics—a poet who made his full effect at the moment he wrote. Johnson did him justice. Mr. Tillotson, with considerably less judgment and the doubtful advantage of living two hundred years later, adds a number of subtleties in appreciation. "That idea of the Picturesque, from the swan just gilded with the sun amidst the shade of a tree over the water" we should hardly have guessed as an *obiter dictum* of Pope's; in such discoveries Mr. Tillotson's essay is rich. He builds rather much on them. But this is the first book solely devoted to Pope's poetry that has been written for two centuries, and it is well worth reading.

G. W. STONIER

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OPEN LETTER

Giovanni di Paolo. By JOHN POPE-HENNESSY. *Chatto and Windus.* £1 1s.

"You naughty boy," I feel inclined to say, "going and getting mixed up with Berenson and Van Marle and the rest of the sixth form. At your time of life, Hennessy, you ought to be out in the air developing an appetite, instead of shut up in school because you want to get a scholarship. I won't say you've chosen a bad subject. But don't go and make a muddle of it by working too hard. That was all very well thirty years ago. To-day we know the difference between art and art-history—at least in this country. Or are you thinking of setting up a shop in Fifth Avenue when you've left? I hope not. Of course, you can make a living as an expert, which would be a comfort to your parents. But you will be a better man if you learn to enjoy art, and better still, if you can teach other people to do so. You have taught me something here. But I suspect you could have taught me a good deal more if you hadn't begun to model yourself on the prefects so early.

"I'm sorry if you find this unjust. Please don't think I want to belittle the amount of work this book has cost you, or the amount of thought you have devoted to your Giovanni. What's more, your intention has been right. You have chosen a subject for its value and its novelty. Yet while explaining both, you have avoided overstating either. That in itself deserves a prize.

"It is the *way* you have explained things I don't like, because it sounds as if you were trying to live up to a standard, and write in a style, which aren't yours and which set my teeth on edge.

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whose ever they are. Only in one or two passages can I hear your own voice, which is what I want to hear. Let me remind you of them. By 1445, you say, Giovanni di Paolo 'had produced landscapes in a vein of unforced and imperishable beauty which no painter was to strike again.' On page 84, you call these landscapes 'perhaps the freest expression of visual individualism in the whole body of Italian painting. Their chequered fields and tortured rocks reflect the supernatural character of St. John's own mission.' I doubt the wisdom of the last sentence; you ought to look in yourself, not in St. John, for the reflection. But when you say:

> Giovanni di Paolo was a Gerard Hopkins in a world of Swinburnes. He is often grotesque and sometimes rude. But the faults are the expression of an inner strain few other painters felt, and his pictures at their best provide us with a unique example of style heated to receive the impress of a vital and candescent personality,

then I know you have looked into yourself after all, and have allowed the reader to share in just this little glimpse of what you found there. My complaint is that you should withhold this glimpse till the end of the book and that it should be so small.

"I don't dispute your estimate of Giovanni di Paolo, because I don't know his works, though the photographs of those landscapes show why he interested you. Whether I should agree if I saw them in paint, or whether you will agree in ten years' time, I can't say. But your book has aroused my curiosity, and curiosity is the condition of knowledge. Next time I go to Italy, there will be something new to look at. For that I remain your humble debtor,

ROBERT BYRON"

THE NATION'S CAPITAL

The National Capital and Other Statistical Studies. By SIR JOSIAH STAMP. *King.* 10s. 6d.

Sir Josiah Stamp's new volume is intended in the main for specialists. It consists largely of revisions of important articles contributed in recent years to the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, together with certain papers on similar subjects which have been published elsewhere. There has been a good deal of revision; and wherever possible the author has brought his studies up to date by the inclusion of more recent statistics. For example, Sir Josiah Stamp's well-known index number of profits is here brought up to 1936; and his study of the national capital, originally given as the presidential address to the Royal Statistical Society in 1930, has been rewritten so as to make a comparison between 1928 and 1935. Other important papers reissued in this volume include the well-known study dealing with the influence of changes in prices on the purchasing power of incomes above the working-class level, and a paper written as long ago as 1918 on the effect of pre-war trade fluctuations on the level of profits.

In the study which gives its name to the volume, Sir Josiah Stamp, following up the conclusions reached in *British Incomes and Property*, discusses the very great difficulties in the way of arriving at any satisfactory measurement of the national capital as a whole, and the different consequences of proceeding by means of a capitalisation of incomes on the one hand or a valuation of assets on the other. He shows that, if the former method is adopted, any change in the rates of interest at once reacts on the capital value of assets of all types, and thus causes the national capital to be differently estimated, quite apart from any change in its actual composition. Indeed, the reader is likely to reach the conclusion that capital assets are immeasurable as a whole, and that it is better wherever possible to discuss the problems of economic distribution in terms of income rather than of property.

In the study dealing with recent changes in profits, Sir Josiah Stamp's index, based on 1924, rises to nearly 107 in 1929, sinks to under 75 in 1932, and then rises again to 105 in 1935 and 120 in 1936, the last two figures being given as provisional and subject to later correction. This index, it will be remembered, is based on a method which gives less sharply fluctuating results than the *Economist* index, which the author holds to be "too lively" because it has a bias resulting from its dependence on "large cases and fluctuating industries."

In the study on the distribution of the national capital Sir Josiah Stamp attempts not only an analysis of the existing distribution between different types of enterprise, but also as between 1928, the pre-war period, and a period 45 years ago. This surprisingly shows manufactures as accounting to-day for a larger proportion of the national capital than half a century ago; but this change is due to the considerable decline in the estimated value of transport undertakings as a proportion of the whole (from 30 to 17 per cent.). Retail distribution is estimated as having advanced from 10 to 15 per cent. It is exceedingly useful to have these studies, to which the student is compelled to make frequent reference, gathered together in a single volume.

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Mr. Sprott, who recently produced a volume on psychology for the student, has now followed it up with a first-rate introduction for the general reader. His purpose is to supply a guide to the various schools which claim exclusive possession of the psychological field, and announce their monopoly of truth by the simple process of converting their conjectures into dogmas. Mr. Sprott is admirably impartial. An adherent of no school, he presents in succession the views of each in relation to the various problems which psychologists discuss. His own standpoint is academic and conservative. This is all to the good in one who purports to provide a guide to psychology for those having no previous acquaintance with the subject. For the academic psychologist cannot but admit, and alone can afford to admit, that there is no one theory which covers with even the remotest approach to comprehensiveness the various problems raised by the study of the human mind. Mr. Sprott deals in turn with the relation of the mind in sense experience to the outside world, with memory, imagination, belief and thought, and concludes with an admirable discussion of the Mind-Body problem.

It is impossible in these days for a psychologist to confine his attention to the methods, technique and results of his science. Inevitably, he must wonder to what extent it is useful as well as true. There is a widespread impression that psychology can save the world, and Mr. Sprott is not wholly free from the naive optimism that it embodies. Let us, he says in effect, forget our notions as to how people ought to behave and discover how they do behave. To discover how they do behave is to become

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RIDER

" psychology-minded." When we have all become psychology-minded, when, that is to say, we have all discovered how people behave, it may, he thinks, be possible for us to cause them to behave in ways of which we approve. (The difference between " ways of which we approve " and " ways in which they ought to behave " is not as clear as could be wished.) The avowed object of Mr. Sprott's book is, therefore, to cause people to become " psychology-minded," and I charge him with naive optimism because he thinks that world problems, social problems, problems of moral education, even, apparently, problems of private intercourse, will be solved when we know more psychology. The suggestion dates back to the Greeks; " Know yourself," they enjoined, and everything will be added unto you. But in the case of the self, as in that of other things, ignorance is sometimes bliss. Many of us when we look within, appalled by what we find, turn away our gaze and endeavour in absorption with the outside world to forget ourselves. This is not to assert that the injunction to " forget " is a better guide to living than the injunction to " know " yourself. It is merely to suggest that the problems of human conduct are too complex to be solved by a single formula, and that even " psychology-mindedness " is not a key to all the riddles presented by life upon this perplexing planet. But whatever view one may hold of Mr. Sprott's estimate of the possibilities of psychology, there can be no two opinions as to the adequacy of his treatment.

C. E. M. JOAD

PRIMITIVE SEX

Totemica. By SIR JAMES FRAZER. *Macmillan.* 25s.

Coming Into Being Among the Australian Aborigines. By M. F. ASHLEY-MONTAGU. *Routledge.* 21s.

Religion and Social Organisation in Central Polynesia. By R. W. WILLIAMSON. Edited by R. PIDDINGTON. *Cambridge University Press.* 25s.

Tribe in Transition. By D. N. MAJUMDAR. *Longmans.* 10s. 6d.

Sex, Custom and Psychopathology. By B. J. F. LAUBSCHER. *Routledge.* 21s.

At the time of the Abdication crisis it was explained that this and that wouldn't do because the colonies, Australia taking an especially firm line, wouldn't stand for it. Professor Ashley-Montagu's book deals with Australian procreative beliefs and therefore brings one a great deal of information relevant to the question of marriage and the antipodean conception of Caesar's wife. The objections cannot have been those rumoured to carry weight at the time, for the text mentions " the normal custom " among most tribes " of lending one's wives to individuals of the privileged classes," and the telegonic objection seems to be disposed of by the fact that the majority of the Australians think that there is no connection between sexual intercourse and child-bearing. A further objection would also seem to be incomprehensible, in Central Australia at least, as there the view is very strongly held that the mother and child are not blood relations; an idea that naturally rules out the possibility of even thinking of the idea of marrying beneath one. It seems at the end that the only possible exception that could be taken to the marriage would be that it would seem irregular to those tribes who ensure exogamy by cross cousin marriage; they do not feel happy if a man who could marry the daughter of his mother's mother's brother's daughter does not.

The larger portion of Sir James Frazer's book is also concerned with Australia, although a widely divergent view of the ground is taken by the two authors. Sir James, in this supplement to his *Totemism and Exogamy*, adheres to the straight-line evolutionary theory and in his view the land is a bed in which the magical pre-religious period of human social development has become fossilised. It is his view that by taking various primitive cultures and placing them in series a complete history of the growth of our culture can be obtained. Ashley-Montagu represents the opposite extreme to the evolutionary school and believes with the American school that there is no basis of comparison between one culture and another, and that generalisations are impossible. It is about this latter view that the main battle over Anthropological theory is taking place and the case against it is brilliantly stated by Professor Malinowski in a preface to Ashley-Montagu's book. He suggests that there are certain constants on which a true science with generalisations and laws can be built while he entirely rejects the straight-line evolutionary theory. It is, however, Sir James' merit that his theory does not lead him to select or to distort his material, the abundance and accuracy of which makes his book of unquestionable value.

This is a compliment that unfortunately cannot be paid to Robert Williamson's posthumous work, in which an obvious preference for a regular pantheon leads to a moulding of tenous or locally varying gods on attractive but improbable Greek models. There are sections of the book, however, devoted to tabu, primitive law and land tenure, in which Williamson as a solicitor was unusually well equipped to make a contribution. The extent to which Polynesian Religion and daily life interlocked is very striking, and the social disorganisation which resulted from the introduction of technical methods and values unprovided with religious observance or associations is worth consideration. It led to a religious collapse that destroyed individual faith in the tabus on which the behaviour and sanity of the individual were based and to the sickness that has made the Polynesians a dying race. Mr. Aldous Huxley attributes this sickness to the importation of a mechanomorphic cosmology in a remark that surpasses his earlier ventures on tabu; this is a point a good deal easier to clear up than the virtue of Zen Buddhism and readers of *Ends and Means* could do far worse than take it up. The relevant facts are in Williamson's book, and it is unusually pleasantly printed for a work of this character. In conjunction with *A Tribe in Transition*, which deals with disorganisation in progress, and with Dr. Laubscher's study of disorganisation in its last stages and its effect on the individual, the book gives one some conception of the fate of a defenceless ideology.

The Hos, of whom Dr. Majumdar writes, were a people with a low standard of life, but with a rather high conception of the duty of the individual to the community. Their social organisation was based on a division of labour, the men hunting and the women cultivating the few crops. The code of individual behaviour has been destroyed by the importation of Western justice with its idea of human and not divine retribution, so that the law is now something that the Hos cheat if they can. The brisk expropriation of the hunting grounds by the Indian Government in 1892 not only upset the social balance but also removed meat from the diet with a natural effect on the general health. The rise in fertility that has accompanied the decline in health and drop in the expectation of life seems mysterious, until one recalls Disraeli's Irishman who knew one other sport besides hunting. Dr. Majumdar deals primarily with the forms of the dissolving structure, but when he describes the phantasy of the individual losing faith in his tradition it is interesting to see how similar it is to the phantasy of Dr. Laubscher's lost Africans or Freud's European bourgeois. The resemblance of the lover of Markand Deogam's wife to the Tikoloshe, and their resemblance to Babbit's dream girl and the spirit lovers of sleeping mortals all over the world give considerable strength to Malinowski's view as to the possibility of generalisation in Anthropology. Dr. Laubscher's account of the behaviour of the native who cannot stand the strain of coping with sexual antagonism or family conflicts unprotected by the traditional custom and protective myths suggests that such similarity in derangement between white and black must imply almost identical normal mental processes. This is important with reference to the argument between Malinowski and the Boas-Benedict school, but it is still more important with reference to the question of the transfer of certain African peoples to the Union of South Africa, where the view is held that the native is rather more than half an animal. Dr. Laubscher's book not only demonstrates their humanity and their right to human treatment, but it also demonstrates that in the Union they are not getting anything approaching their rights. The reader can be recommended to Dr. Laubscher's book, to a *Tribe in Transition*, and to Professor Ashley-Montagu's book for their extreme interest psychologically and for the light they throw on Britain's competence as a colonial power.

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The Gull's Way. By NANCY PRICE. *Gollancz.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Miss Nancy Price has a romantic imagination, and to show her an old house is to have it immediately peopled with ghosts. She has also an effortless pen, and is equally at ease writing of the land, the sea or of Burge. Perhaps more at home with Burge, for the reader of *The Gull's Way* never escapes him. He has an opinion on every subject, and when he has nothing to say it is merely his way of expressing disapproval; he has been everywhere, seen everything and knows everybody. An annoyingly persistent person. The book he so loquaciously usurps is a record of Miss Price's voyage along the east coast of England in the *Thrush*, a cutter of thirty-one tons with a crew of three, the pedantic figure of Skipper, the author (well known to London theatregoers), and, of course, Burge, who represents the fo'c'sle and who greets us in the first paragraph and remains triumphant to the last. It is a difficult book to classify. Sailing, country lanes, topography, local history are all dealt with; unexpectedly, it omits the one subject we should expect—acting. The author has, nevertheless, packed her theatrical gifts with her sextant and her yachting cap, and employs them to catch the coast dialects and to depict the characters she found by the wayside.

IN spite of the excellence of many broadcast programmes, and the impressive repertory of recorded music that is now available, we still hear of people who have been unable to extract enjoyment from such reproduced music as they have heard: there are yet others who are irritated, when listening to their radio or gramophone, by an awareness that the music is coming to them at second hand. It is for just such critically minded lovers of music that we make the famous "Mark" series of gramophones, and Davey Radio. We welcome an opportunity of demonstrating to them how artistically worthy reproduced music can be when the instruments of reproduction are made individually by craftsmen. We think they will be surprised and delighted by the unexpected beauties of tone and detail that are revealed, both in recorded and in broadcast music. Above all they will appreciate the authenticity of the performance. For the benefit of those who may imagine that such excellence is only obtainable at great expense, we add that our acoustic gramophones cost from £13 10s. 0d., radio-gramophones from £53 10s. 0d., and receivers from £39.

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GRAMOPHONE NOTES

THE fifth volume of the Sibelius Society contains the *Fourth Symphony* (9 sides), a selection from the *Incidental Music to "The Tempest"* (3 sides), and *The Return of Lemminkäinen*, a "Legend" from the same suite as the well-known *Swan of Tuonela*. The orchestra throughout is the London Philharmonic, and the conductor Sir Thomas Beecham. Whether he records for Columbia or H.M.V. (in this instance for the latter) Beecham always seems to obtain finer reproduction than any other conductor. Rumour has it that he refuses absolutely to tone down or modify in any way his concert hall scale and style. However that may be, in this album he has surpassed himself. Of course, the scoring of the Sibelius *Fourth* is spare and clean and much easier to transfer to the wax than, say, a Brahms or a Bax symphony. But when every allowance has been made, the combined power, sweetness and clarity (quite without swish) of the massed strings in the third movement must be judged a new experience on the gramophone. Admirers of Sibelius have wanted a good *Fourth* for years (the unsatisfactory Stokowski set was not thought worthy of issue in this country), and now they certainly have one, for the interpretation, fiery and yet perfectly controlled, matches the recording. As for the Symphony itself, I doubt if Sibelius has surpassed its originality and beauty even in the one-movement *Seventh*. Of the *Third* and *Fifth*, as of the attractive, if sometimes bombastic, *First* and *Second*, it is easy to tire; but it will be a long time before we exhaust the *Fourth*. What the commentators say about its novel construction—that it is music without mortar, in which the composer "lays one structural block against another without paring the edges"—is true; as true, that is to say, as such metaphors can ever be. But if you like any Sibelius at all, do not be deterred by such phrases from acquiring this album. You may be puzzled in the concert hall, but that is just where the gramophone has the advantage: four or five playings will do more to reveal the logical integrity of this music than pages of analytical notes. (The score, by the way, is exceptionally cheap at 3*s.* 6*d.*) For example, the great tune which at the climax of the third movement streams out from the massed strings in octaves, is heard several times previously in a fragmentary and uncertain form; at first we are disturbed and bewildered by these snatches that seem to lead nowhere, and it is only when we have heard the movement often enough to hold the whole design in memory that these scraps not merely explain themselves but positively delight. To take a parallel from a very different sort of music; most people hearing Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* for the first or second time find the little wisps of waltz material which appear only to be immediately whisked away again as tantalising as Alice's dinner with the Red and White Queens: but when they know the whole score they derive pleasure from their very elusiveness. If space allowed, I should like to say more about this symphony, especially about its brilliant last movement (of the second only I am a little uncertain). It is perhaps a pity that one is obliged to buy seven records in order to obtain it, but only for financial reasons: no more charming trimmings to this great Finnish joint could be found than the very accessible "*Tempest*" music and the exciting *Lemminkäinen*.

H.M.V. issue in the same month another highly important new symphony, Vaughan Williams in *F minor*. This is played by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the composer, and occupies four records, one to each movement. I mention this because some people may like to experiment with a single movement before risking their 24*s.*, and if they do this, they will probably find the second the most attractive. Very little is left in this powerful, almost brutal, work of the old contemplative, wide-horizoned lyricism of this composer, or indeed of his less attractive Norfolk-jacket mood either. The end of the slow movement is moving, but in general the work appears to me to have more apparent than real strength. And the Scherzo is so very like Holst; as though with the more powerful apparatus of the thirties V.W. had discovered a new Planet. I am less disturbed by my failure to take to this symphony when I learn that the composer himself remarked: "I don't know whether I like it, but this is what I meant." All gratitude is due to H.M.V. for enabling musicians to grapple with his meaning; in doing so they will find Frank Howes's booklet on *The Later Works of R. Vaughan Williams* in the "Musical Pilgrim" series a great help. Even he, a professed admirer of the work, writes, I see, of steel girders, glass, concrete, electricity, speed, and—Fascism. Nothing, by the way, impressed the foreign critics who were

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JAMES HANLEY

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"His great virtue is imaginative sympathy, the ability to enter into any situation without prejudice and without bitterness, and undeviating humanity. There are terrible stories in this book, and perhaps the most terrible is 'The Last Voyage', describing how a ship's stoker clings to his job long after he is fit for it, and at last jumps into the furnace. This story reaches a pitch of horror which is beyond pity; yet the figure of the old stoker remains throughout understandable, even in his last desperate act; everything, his own hardships, the poverty of his family, their quarrels and reconciliations, is human through and through, reasonable in a mad setting. In another story Mr. Hanley makes one of the characters reflect: "Truth is like a sort of twilight that few of us see, but when we do see it it seems more dreadful than despair." He himself sees this twilight and sees it without turning away his eyes, with undivided attention; that is the reason for the overwhelming effect of this story. He shows the same quality in another fine story, 'The Storm'. . . .

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The Listener, Jan. 5th, 1938.

***HALF AN EYE**

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the bodley head

invited over to hear a week's English music-making a year or two ago more than this symphony. Of Vaughan Williams' sincerity there is, of course, no doubt whatever.

New works are great thieves of space: more familiar music must be content with brief discussion. Weingartner conducts the Vienna Philharmonic in a performance of Beethoven's *First Symphony* (3 Cols.) which is much the best recorded version: the others are quite old, and the Viennese echo is here less troublesome than usual. An exceedingly welcome recording, and, strangely, a first one, is that of Mozart's *C minor Piano Concerto* (K. 491) by Edwin Fischer and the L.P.O., conducted by Lawrence Collingwood. This is one of Mozart's greatest instrumental works, its special glory being the profound and widely ranging first movement with its unforgettable "interrogative" theme. Fischer is an excellent Mozart pianist, and this is a most satisfactory set, though not quite so felicitous in performance and recording as his K. 482. The blame is partly Collingwood's; there is much to admire in his handling of the score, but he does not always contrive to keep the inner parts clear, perhaps because the body of strings sounds excessive. An exactly opposite complaint may be made of the new versions of two famous virtuoso concertos, both of which are accompanied by the L.P.O. under Walter Goehr. Moiseiwitsch plays the Rachmaninoff *C minor* on 4 four-shilling H.M.V.'s, and Petri the Tchaikovsky *B flat minor* on 4 Cols. Both these works demand weight and opulence in the orchestra, and the new recordings sound a little skimped in that department. Moiseiwitsch manages the plushy Rachmaninoff admirably, though his performance can hardly be expected to rival that of the composer, who is perhaps the greatest of living pianists. Petri's *B flat minor* is the performance of a great virtuoso, ardent, vivid, impetuous. In sheer fluency it must yield a little to the H.M.V. set by Rubinstein, which also enjoys the advantage of a more sensitive conductor in Barbirolli. What superb imagination and craft there is in this work: triumphant openings, and second subjects so silky that they positively demand to be stroked. This is Tchaikovsky at the top of his form; the more blatant side of his nature is to be seen in the *Capriccio Italien*, beautifully recorded and played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Heger (2 Parlo.). Liszt also is represented far below his best by the *Todtentanz*, that would-be frightening set of variations on the "Dies Irae" theme, excellently recorded on 2 Cols. by Kilenyi and a French orchestra.

The César Franck *Violin Sonata* has already been recorded no fewer than six times. Here is a seventh version, by Heifetz and Rubinstein, on three H.M.V.'s. All previous recordings have taken four records, so it is not surprising to find the tempi in this set faster than usual. Except in the last movement, this does not lead to triviality; but both artists, accomplished and fluent as they are, miss a good deal of the elusive charm of the work, and are rather obviously not a combination accustomed to play together. Much the most authentic and satisfying record remains that of Cortot and Thibaud (H.M.V.), an admirable example of duo playing and of penetration into the mind of the composer. Beside it the performance of the Menuhins sounds immature (also H.M.V.), and the new set, despite a great gain in cleanness, superficial. The greater solidity of the piano chords in the older set is obviously due entirely to Cortot's playing. The only other instrumental record of any consequence is a nice, but not especially striking, group of the Schumann *Fantasiestücke* from Yves Nat (1 Col.).

Jussi Bjorling's new record, his best so far, makes one wonder more than ever at the obtuseness of the critics who failed to realise his importance at his recent Queen's Hall recital. He sings *O Paradiso* from Meyerbeer's *Africana*, and the beautiful *Cielo e Mar* from Ponchielli's *Gioconda* (H.M.V.). I have always thought the words of the latter *aria* unusually distinguished, and am pleased to learn from the label that they are by Boito. Most of the Italian *verismo* school had it in them to supply each opera they wrote with at least one fine tenor *aria*, and Bjørling's impassioned stream of pure tone does full justice to Ponchielli's solitary stroke of genius. And no one since Caruso has felt so deeply the idea behind the music which Meyerbeer puts into the mouth of Vasco da Gama, as he gazes entranced upon the new world; to Gigli, for example, it is just another tenor air. Ebe Stignani sings arias from *Mignon* and *La Favorita* on a Parlophone disc; she is a cut above the average Italian mezzo, but no more. A further historical issue from Parlophone gives us Verdi's *Eri tu* and *Di Provenza il mar* from that fine pre-war baritone, Pasquale Amato; the latter is poor technically, the former gives a glimpse of his great powers, but neither is as good as his Victor (H.M.V.) recordings of the same titles, which I have long treasured. Flagstad (H.M.V.) is as dead as mutton in two Schubert songs and one by Brahms; apparently it needs a full theatre, an orchestra of a hundred, and a five-hour opera to awaken this singer's imagination. She is a wonderful Isolde; but in Lieder there is not much to choose between her and Miss Jones or Miss Smith.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

REPORT ON GENERAL KNOWLEDGE PAPER

This competition was intended to be stiff: it included several questions designed to tease the most patient searcher of books of reference, but only one quotation which we expected might baffle even Professors of English Literature. (This came from the anonymous Elizabethan play, *Edward III*, and the lines are not unlikely to be by Shakespeare.) A. P.-R., however, spotted it. Three questions, however, did remain unanswered by any of the entrants, a quotation from Mallarmé and the identity, respectively, of Skinnybonia and of Hrut. The four best entries were extremely close, and there were seven just behind these. A recount was necessary before the awards could be made. The First Prize is divided between Mrs. E. A. Harvey and A. P.-R., the Second between Quint and A. J. Salmon. Only a few points divided these from Quintus Fabius, Norman Gilroy, Mrs. B. M. Duncan, Bedlam. Miss Margaret Macalister, Hector A. Munro, H. S. Cotterill, I. W. Mellish and Noel Poynter. In certain cases competitors produced unforeseen alternative answers, which were allowed, e.g., we meant by "Zaide" the opera by Mozart, but we admitted the novel by Mme. de Lafayette and also (regretfully) a minor character in Molières' *Le Sicilien*.

A

1—Blake. To the Muses. 2—Hood. The Dream of Eugene Aram. 3—Pope. Elegy upon an Unfortunate Lady. 4—Clough. Dipsychus. 5—Carew. The Rapture. 6—Cory. Mimnermus in Church. 7—Racine. Bajazet. 8—Marvell. Upon Appleton House. 9—Gérard de Nerval. Delfica. 10—Malherbe. Consolation à M. du Perier sur la mort de sa fille. 11—Hugo. Le Chasseur Noir. 12—Vigny. Moise. 13—Mallarmé. Angoisse. 14—Heredia. Antoine et Cléopâtre. 15—Shakespeare. Cymbeline, V, 3. 16—Gay. Epitaph on Himself. 17—Landor. On His Own Epitaph. 18—Cowper. Lines written under the Influence of Delirium. 19—Praed. The Vicar. 20—Southey. The Widow. 21—Thackeray. A Ballad of Bouillabaisse. 22—T. S. Eliot. The Hippopotamus. 23—Edward III, II, 1. 24—George Meredith. Modern Love. 25—Fulke Greville. Mustapha. 26—Tennyson. The Daisy. 27—Vaughan. Quickness. 28—Henley. Apparition. 29—Webster. The White Devil, V. 6. 30—Bon Gaultier Ballads. The Royal Banquet.

B

1—Byron on Coleridge. 2—Landor on Shelley. 3—Ben Jonson on Himself. 4—Pope on Shakespeare. 5—Browning on Andrea del Sarto. 6—Carew on Donne. 7—Wordsworth on Mrs. Hemans. 8—Collins on himself, or Lyttelton on Collins. 9—Drayton on Marlowe. 10—Shelley on Wordsworth. 11—Swift on Marlborough. 12—Browning on Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie.

C

1—Eponymous hero of novel by Radiguet. 2—His burial was subject of El Greco painting. 3—A Bab Ballad. 4—Bust, probably Carthaginian, in Louvre. 5—Play by Fletcher. 6—Blackwood's Magazine. 7—Novel by Trollope. 8—Eighteenth-century portrait painter. 9—Character in Proust. 10—Eighteenth-century German composer. 11—Picture-dealer painted by Van Gogh. 12—Character in *Jude the Obscure*. 13—Palace at Ferrara with celebrated frescoes by Cossa. 14—Duchess of Argyll in *Tour of the Hebrides*. 15—Painter contemporary with Botticelli (a hypothesis of Mr. Berenson's). 16—Eighteenth-century electrical discoverer. 17—A nineteenth-century French priest, since beatified. 18—Mohamet's camel. 19—Popular authoress of *The Heavenly Twins*. 20—Englishwoman married by Talleyrand. 21—Subject of poem by T. S. Eliot. 22—Leader of mutineers of the Bounty. 23—Subject of Van Eyck portrait, National Gallery. 24—Charles James Fox. 25—Samuel Butler's name in Hudibras for William Lilly, the astronomer. 26—Swift's name for Lady Acheson. 27—Character in Petronius' *Satyricon*. 28—Character in Tchekov's *Seagull*. 29—A painting by Courbet. 30—Subject of opera by Verdi (a Genoese doge). 31—Derby winner belonging to Edward VII. 32—Character in Burnt Njal. 33—Opera by Mozart. 34—Cricketer. 35—Nineteenth-century tenor. 36—Minor poet of nineteenth century. 37—Story in *Many Inventions*, by Kipling. 38—Shakespeare's mother. 39—Rustum's horse (Arnold). 40—Character in Othello. 41—Champion Wrestler. 42—The son of Sampson Gideon, the Jewish financier, made a peer in 1789. 43—Cross-eyed Film Star. 44—Seventeenth Century architect. 45—Church in Venice.

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E

1—Cratinus, Cicero, Apollinarius Sidonius, Lesches or unknown. 2—552 A.D. Victory of Narses, Justinian's commander-in-chief, and defeat and death of Baduila, Ostrogoth King of Italy. 3—On curds and grasshoppers (Pliny). 4—Last month of year in Attic calendar. A school of doctors in ancient world. Ancient Sicilian coins. Mother of Themistocles or possibly an African town. Lacedaemonian name of the Graces. 5—By Stadia. 12%. 3 obols.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 410

Set by Frederick Laws

The usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) are offered for the best sets of four new conversational openings. They should be genuinely icebreaking and serviceable in more than one social milieu. "Do you like string?" has the necessary universality. "Have you read any good books lately?" has not.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, January 21st.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 408

Set by Desmond Shawe-Taylor

"This is a most un-English crime"—magistrate quoted in the press. We offer the usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) for the best lists of the six most un-English and the six most English crimes.

Report by Desmond Shawe-Taylor

This was surely no occasion for total seriousness; of a large entry too many were irrevocably solemn. I had hoped for plenty of such un-English crimes as "picking a man's pocket during a performance of the National Anthem," or—as a friend suggests—"taking Lady Baldwin to an All-in Wrestling Match." In fact, the terms "English" and "un-English" were differently interpreted; for example, a certain sexual misdemeanour occurred twice, once in each category. Clearly one competitor classed it as English, because it is actually prevalent in England; the other as un-English, because it would certainly be so described by a magistrate. The latter view seems right; and for the purposes of this competition, un-English crimes are such as the great bourgeois mass of "right-thinking people" would abhor and condemn, English crimes such as they would instinctively condone. I have also allowed the word "crime" to include activities which are not legally, but only morally, criminal (such as fox-hunting), and several merely social crimes as well.

Here are some of the best crimes. First, un-English: Attempt to Alarm or Injure Sovereign, Abortion (except in Harley Street), Cruelty to Animals (in urban districts) (Peter Chamberlain); Setting Fire to Lost Dogs' Home (D. S. Livingstone); *Crime passionnel* (so un-English that it has a French name) (Leaf); Ignorance of the Current Test Match Scores (Gregoe); Voting Labour (J. W. Huke); and Potting the White (W. Leslie Nicholls). To these should be added Abdicating, a neat hit by someone to whom I must apologise, for I have lost his paper.

Second, English: Poisoning by Coffee, Assaulting a Man for Obstructing One's View of a Football Match (J. S. Wane); Manslaughter by Motorist in Avoiding Dog, Shooting of Female Relative as Alternative to Fate Worse than Death (Leaf); Ladylike Shoplifting (Kleptomania) (D. S. Livingstone); Cheating Railway Companies (several competitors); Causing an Obstruction (Ceasing to Motor) (Peter Chamberlain); Disfiguring "Rima" (A. T. G.).

Several competitors produced pairs, such as J. S. Wane's Killing a Fox Painlessly (un-English) and Killing a Stag Painfully (English); the best of these was J. Danson Davies's To convey recklessly at seventy miles an hour a Dead Body in a Motor Hearse (un-English), and To convey recklessly at seventy miles an hour a Live Body in a Low Sports Car (English). I recommend for First and Second Prizes E. J. Evans and Harry Broadbent respectively, who have with considerable ingenuity cast the whole of their entries into this form.

FIRST PRIZE

ENGLISH CRIMES	UN-ENGLISH CRIMES
Homicide—by fists.	Homicide—by knife.
Cruelty—to fox.	Cruelty—to dog.
Theft—of £1,000,000 by misleading prospectus.	Theft—of 5s. from owner's pocket.
Assaulting the police—by undergraduates.	Assaulting the police—by the lower orders.
Assaulting one's own children or children committed to one's care.	Assaulting other people's children not committed to one's care.
Selling information or material to a potential enemy State—by a manufacturer of armaments.	Selling information or material to a potential enemy State—by an employee of Government.

E. J. EVANS

SECOND PRIZE

UN-ENGLISH CRIMES (due to Unpardonable Sin)	ENGLISH CRIMES (due to Sin)
Cold-blooded Murder.	Murder.
Heartless Blackmail.	Blackmail.
Unlimited Profiteering.	Profiteering.
Unregulated Sharepushing.	Sharepushing.
Barefaced Robbery.	Robbery.
Unprovoked Aggression.	Aggression.

HARRY BROADBENT

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 263.—THE BRAVEBEARDS

(In response to some requests for another problem on the lines of Cruisers, Ltd.)

When I visited the Ookookoo Protectorate recently I was introduced to the five famous Bravebeard brothers. They were living in retirement on their alfalfa farms, but each, I was told, had served for ten years as an officer in the Ookookoo Defence Force, and each was now in receipt of a modest pension. "What's more," said my informant, "their pensions are identical in amount."

"I don't see anything funny in that," said I, "if each of them served for ten years."

"Ah!" said my informant, "but their careers differed in detail. There are five commissioned ranks in our service: Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Colonel, Commandant. Now an ex-officer's annual pension is calculated as follows: £10 in respect of each year's service as Lieutenant; £20 in respect of each year's service as Captain; £30 in respect of each year's service as Major; £40 in respect of each year's service as Colonel; £50 in respect of each year's service as Commandant. Which brings me to my point. No two of the Bravebeards put in the same number of years' service as Major, nor yet the same number of years as Colonel. Brutus Bravebeard, for instance, was Colonel for a longer period than either of his older brothers, but both his juniors served longer than he did in that rank."

For how many years did Brutus Bravebeard serve as Major?

PROBLEM 261.—THIRTEEN TRICKS

A cipher at last which a fair proportion of solvers have decoded. The basic idea is simply that the 52 cards in a pack give equivalents for two alphabets. The first alphabet is A = ♠ A, B = ♠ K, and so on down to the ♥ 2; the second is A = ♦ A, B = ♦ K, and so on to the ♣ 2. Each letter has thus two equivalents, from which it is easy to select the right letters for the message:

RING ME UP TO-DAY

PROBLEM 260.—CRUISERS, LTD.

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: N. Wragg, Dunelm, Bushey Road, Bournemouth.

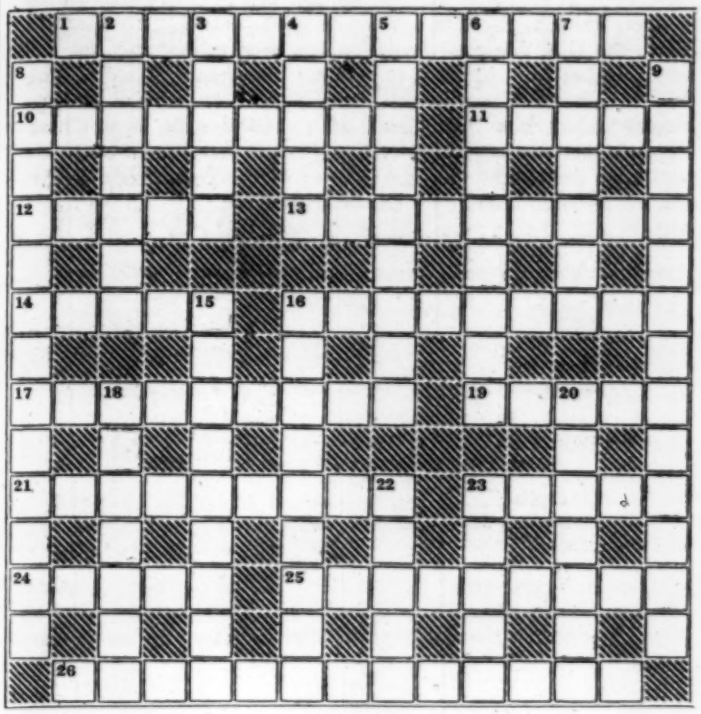
Six points are awarded.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 410

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

John E. Elder, 32 Grange Gardens, Pinner, Middlesex

ACROSS

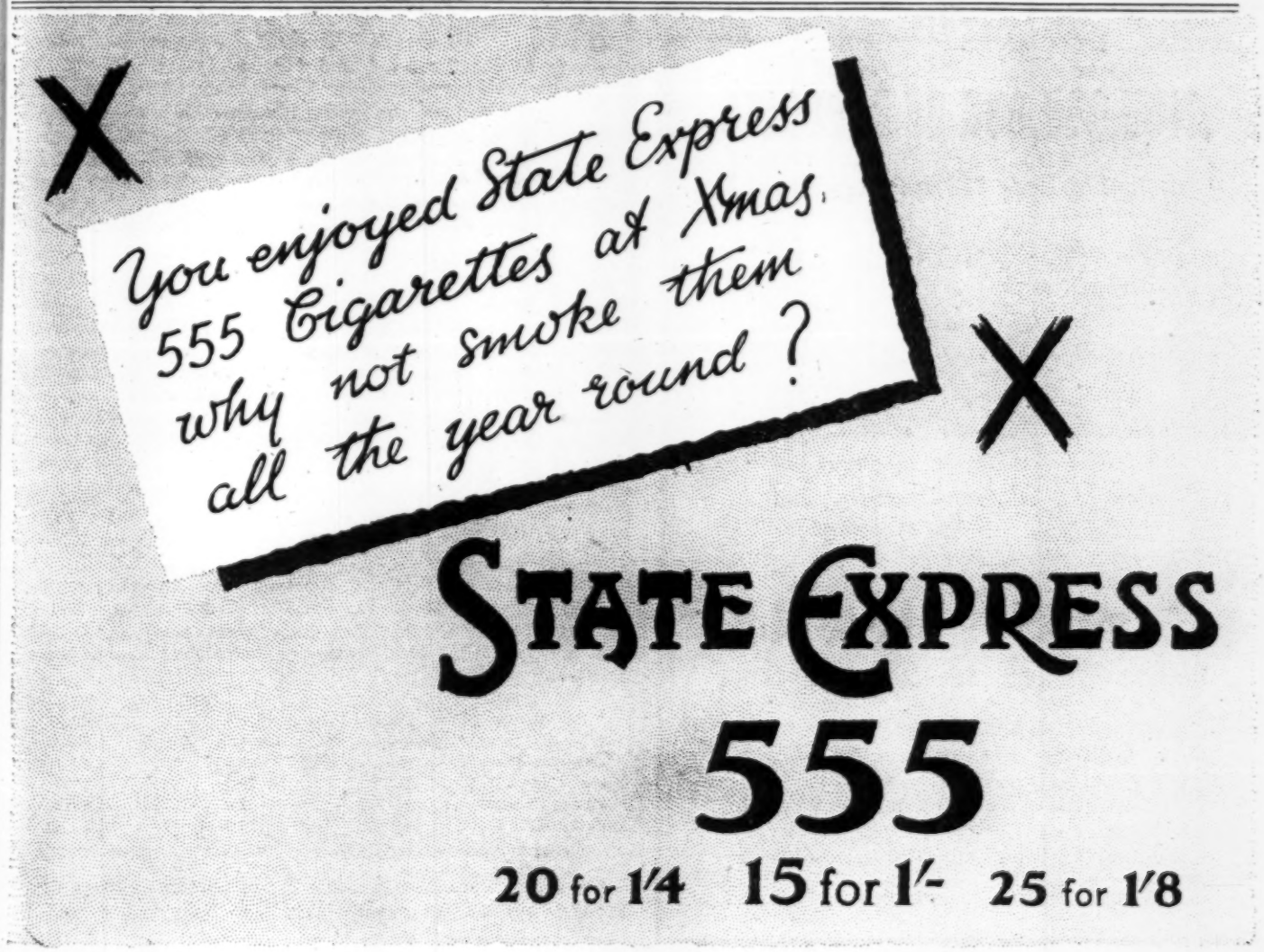
1. Not even the ablest citizen could get such a turnover by upright methods. (13)
10. Was this what the Germans suffered from before their armies reoccupied Cologne? (9)
11. Lady Ruff. (5)
12. Eden's former mistress is come back. (5)
13. Give Ted an extra hundred. (9)
14. Normal place for one's gear on a journey by road. (5)
16. Stoppage the Board knew about. (9)
17. The result of this is repletion in the young. (9)
19. They are entranced with their positions of course. (5)
21. The score of the batsman whose wicket has just fallen? (9)
23. Bovine guide. (5)
24 (rev.) A bit of the mast perhaps for those who are pigging it. (5)
25. It went up the line regardless of the rails. (9)
26. A Quaker in the Royal Household. (13)

DOWN

2. The mine tore the net. (7)
3. This bird can fly And this fly can bird (of course). (5)
4. One gets the shivers after five. (5)
5. English fare for yeomen. (9)
6. How one is awarded points for sound memory in music perhaps. (9)
7 (rev.) How the hawkers vie with each other. (7)
8. Overnight attire. (13)
9. No doubt the first fiddle bows on it. (13)
15. If you do, is it the reverse of what the P.M.G. asked you to do for Christmas? (9)
16. His wives came to a curious end. (9)
18. Usually indicated by EXIT. (7)
20. Where 18 leads to. (7)
22. About 1,000 it appears. (5)
23. How to contest games of lawn tennis? (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

H	A	C	K	S	■	H	A	T	S	T	A	N	D	S
A	■	R	■	W	■	A	■	R	■	I	■	O	■	I
R	A	I	M	E	N	T	■	E	N	T	E	R	E	D
D	■	M	■	E	■	B	■	K	■	R	■	T	■	E
C	H	E	A	P	J	A	C	K	■	A	C	H	E	S
O	■	■	■	E	■	N	■	E	■	T	■	C	■	■
U	T	T	E	R	E	D	■	D	I	E	B	A	C	K
R	■	U	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	P	■	N	■
T	A	L	L	A	G	E	■	D	E	A	D	E	Y	E
■	■	I	■	R	■	N	■	O	■	N	■	■	■	E
A	S	P	I	C	■	F	O	O	T	S	T	O	O	L
O	■	T	■	L	■	O	■	R	■	W	■	T	■	D
C	O	R	S	A	I	R	■	M	A	E	S	T	R	O
O	■	E	■	M	■	C	■	A	■	R	■	E	■	W
C	H	E	A	P	S	E	A	T	■	S	I	R	E	N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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

AMERICA TO INFLATE?—METAL ACTIVITY—STORE RESULTS AND SHARES

So Wall Street is having its recovery after all. It is not a sound recovery based upon the return of business confidence and a revival in capital goods. It is the unstable Rooseveltian revival based upon the renewed unbalancing of the budget and hoped for Government spending on public works in the shape of battleships. But it is a recovery and it serves to revive speculative sentiment, which is the life-blood of Wall Street. Technically, the market was entitled to go higher. It had been depressed by the anti-business speeches of the President and his lieutenants and by the fears of defaults by Baltimore and Ohio as well as Erie Railroads. The news that the Reconstruction and Finance Corporation had recommended, and that the Inter-State Commerce Commission had approved, loans to Baltimore was the first signal to the "bears" to cover. Next, the improvement in the figures of steel output and the report that General Motors were taking back 35,000 employees created the impression that the worst of the business recession had been seen. Finally, the budget deficit of $1,000 millions, with the same to follow next year, caused a renewal of "inflation" talk. There is no doubt that America is in an inflationary movement and it is significant that the first markets to recover have been the speculative commodities, such as copper and tin. We may see some repetition of the inflationary events of early 1937. The British investor who plays the New York market must be prepared for sharp fluctuations. At the moment the armament shares such as Bethlehem Steel (the only large steel company with actual shipbuilding facilities) and Douglas Aircraft have risen sharply in the last 10 days—the former from $53⅞ to $65 and the latter from $35½ to $44. The market may therefore be reaching the point of profit-taking, but now that Mr. Roosevelt has announced a Government spending programme—with more to follow if business executives do not recover their nerves—Wall Street may go further ahead.

The market for non-ferrous metals has temporarily revived. Tin has risen on the week to £190¾ per ton, not withstanding the fact that the December figures showed new supplies at 10,636 tons against deliveries of only 9,015 tons, and stocks nearly 2,500 tons higher at 25,950 tons. Speculative buyers both of tin and spelter have been in evidence, but the advance in prices has been led by copper, which has risen in London by £3 to over £43 10s. per ton, while the U.S. domestic quotation has been raised since the end of December from 9½ cents to 11 cents per pound. Coupled with talk of American rearmament there have been reports of large buying orders from Japan and, on a smaller scale, from China. Expectations of a repetition of last spring's metal price boom are decidedly premature, but the revival in the commodity market has led to some inquiry for the leading shares.

	High 1937.	Present Price.	Last Earnings %.	Div. %.	Gross Yield %.
Anaconda, $50 ..	£14 7/16	£7 7/16	$3.10* p. sh.	$2.00§ p. sh.	£5 7 6
Rhod. Anglo-Amer., 10/-	42/7½	26/-	15.8	15	‡£5 19 6
Rhokana, £1	£19	12 11/16	79.8	62½	£4 18 6
Roans, 5/- stock ..	30/-	20/9	37.09†	26¾†	£6 8 6
Selection Trust, 10/- ..	45/9	27/6	20.4	15	‡£5 12 0

‡ Equivalent gross, after allowing for a reduced rate of Income Tax.
† On new capital.
* Nine months to September 30th, 1937.
§ Annual rate.

Current yields strike me as being no more than adequate. Until American revival is on a healthier basis it would be rash to follow temporary speculative up-swings inspired by inflationary hopes.

* * *

Considering that 1937 was a year in which rising wholesale prices must have created difficulties for fixed-price stores, shareholders have no cause to complain of the Woolworth results. Net profits are up from £5,832,442 to £6,490,014—a rise of 11 per cent., as compared with increases of 10.5 per cent. and 8.6 per cent. respectively, in 1936 and 1935. Provision for taxation requires £1,697,066, against £1,256,128, and £4,792,948, as compared with £4,576,314, was earned for dividends—an increase of 4.3 per cent. Earnings for ordinary shares amount to approximately 81 per cent., and a final dividend of 35 per cent., *plus* a 10 per cent. cash bonus, is declared, making the total distribution 60 per cent. for the year. At 69*s.* the earnings yield is about 5⅞ per cent. and the dividend yield is £4 7*s.* per cent. I should say the market valuation is about right on present indications. During the past year the company's stores (now totalling 710) have doubtless enjoyed a larger turnover in the industrial areas, and the management has clearly surmounted difficulties of increased costs with some adroitness—I presume by variations in the range of goods offered. With regard to prospects for 1938, there are various factors to be considered. Primary costs have fallen; and if the fall is reflected in the wholesale prices of Woolworth-type manufactured goods, the profit margin per unit of turnover should improve, unless the company has to make, as it might well do, additions to the wages it pays its employees. On the other hand, suppose a trade setback leads to a considerable increase in unemployment, then, unless the retail prices of essential foodstuffs not sold by Woolworths fall, the purchasing power of Woolworth's clientele will decline, and so will turnover—with the proviso that leaner purses might divert to Woolworths some purchasers who now normally shop elsewhere. So far, the class which has been hit—i.e., by Stock Exchange depreciation of its securities—does not represent the typical Woolworth shopper, nor the shopper at Marks and Spencer. I shall be surprised if the profits of the London department stores show an 11 per cent. increase on the year. Here is a comparative table of share prices and yields :—

	High 1937.	Present Price.	Last Earnings %.	Div. %.	Gross Yield %.
Woolworth, 5/- ..	96/3	68/9	76.4†	60	£4 7 3
Marks & Spencer, 5/- ..	84/7½	60/-	75.3	40*	£3 6 3
Harrods, £1 stock ..	91/10½	75/6	23.9	18½	£4 19 3
Barker (John), £1 ..	85/7½	72/3	34.9	15	£4 3 0

* And a capital bonus of 10%. † On present capital.

On a long view there is a case for investment in Marks and Spencer, but for the moment they seem fully valued, and I cannot see anything to go for in the other shares.

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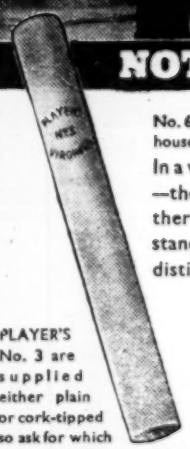

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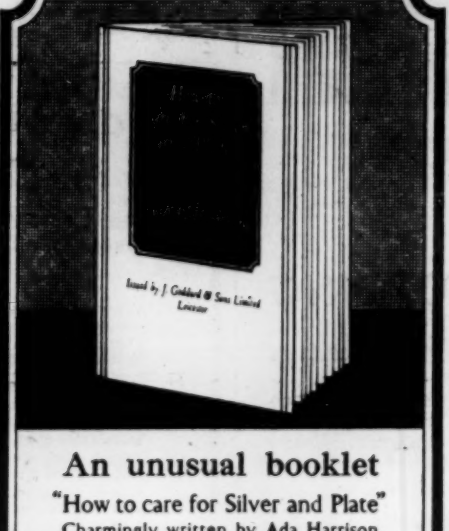

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